



# Anxiety

## Signs & Symptoms of Anxiety:

- Worrying about everyday things
- Irritability
- Light-headedness, shortness of breath, and sweating
- Trouble controlling worries
- Head, muscle, or stomach aches or other unexplained pains
- Frequent bathroom trips
- Trembling or twitching
- Difficulty concentrating
- Trouble falling asleep
- Feeling tired all the time
- Difficulty swallowing
- Trouble relaxing
- Easily startled

Occasional anxiety is a natural part of life. But anxiety disorders involve more than temporary worry or fear. For a person with an anxiety disorder, the anxiety does not go away and can get worse over time. The symptoms can interfere with daily activities such as job performance, school work, and relationships.

## Types of Anxiety Disorders

There are several types of anxiety disorders, including generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), panic disorder, and various phobia-related disorders. It is important to get an accurate diagnosis to affectively treat the disorder.

People with generalized anxiety disorder display excessive anxiety or worry, most days for at least 6 months, about a number of things such as personal health, work, social interactions, and everyday routine.

People with panic disorder have recurrent unexpected panic attacks. Panic attacks are sudden periods of intense fear that come on quickly and reach their peak within minutes. Attacks can occur unexpectedly or can be brought on by a trigger, such as a feared object or situation.

A phobia is an intense fear of specific objects or situations. Although it can be realistic to be anxious in some circumstances, the fear people with phobias feel is out of proportion to the actual danger caused by the situation or object.

### FACT:

Anxiety disorders are common. Nearly **1 in 5** adults in the US will experience an anxiety disorder in any given year.



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## Healing & Recovery

There are many ways people can recover from anxiety. Important components of recovery of include:

- Exercise
- Good self-care
- Supportive friends and family
- Purpose
- Keeping things simple
- Managing other health conditions
- Sleep
- Proper nutrition
- Hope

Get connected to free, 24/7 support from a trained counselor at the Maryland Helpline. Call (2-1-1, press 1), text your zip code to 898-211, or visit [211MD.org](http://211MD.org).



## Risk Factors

Genetic and environmental factors may contribute to the risk of developing an anxiety disorder. Although the risk factors for each type of anxiety disorder can vary, some general risk factors for all types of anxiety disorders include:

- Intense feelings of shyness or embarrassment in childhood
- Exposure to stressful and negative life or environmental events
- A history of anxiety or other mental illnesses in biological relatives
- Some physical health conditions, such as thyroid problems or heart arrhythmias, or caffeine, alcohol, or other substances/medications, can produce or aggravate anxiety symptoms.

## Treatment

Anxiety is a highly treatable condition, unfortunately, people often wait a long time before getting help. Talk to your doctor about your symptoms. Your doctor should do an exam to make sure that a physical problem isn't causing the symptoms. The doctor may refer you to a mental health specialist.

Types of treatment include:



**Support Groups**



**Stress Management**



**Exercise**



**Medications**



**Psychotherapy**



**Other Self-help strategies**



**Mindfulness & Meditation**