



What are Anxiety Disorders?

General anxiety is a typical reaction to everyday stressors such as going on job interviews, taking tests at school, making new friends, or delivering a speech in front of the class. Anxiety can be a good thing, as it forces one to focus and try to cope with a situation. When the anxiety becomes debilitating and disabling, interfering with the ability to function, it becomes a problem. Anxiety manifests itself through five different disorders:

~ **Panic Disorder:** *Panic Disorder* causes a person to have intense fears that can result in physical symptoms such as heart palpitations, shortness of breath, chest and/or abdominal pain, gastrointestinal discomfort, and/or dizzy spells. Panic attacks can occur at any time, even while a person sleeps. Panic attacks can be so severe, that a person fears they are having a heart attack, or even dying. People suffering from panic disorder can become isolated, as they may fear leaving their home.

~ **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD):** *OCD* occurs in persons with anxiety who have obsessions and repetitive behaviors (or compulsions) that interfere with their daily functioning. They are often unable to disconnect from their thoughts, and the obsessions and compulsions originally designed to help them cope with their anxiety, can take over their mind. Common behaviors in a person with OCD are excessive hand washing, checking and rechecking locks, inappropriate sexual thoughts, thoughts of harming others, and/or obsession over religious rituals.

~ **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** *PTSD* manifests after a traumatic event that caused physical and/or fatal harm to another person. PTSD triggers include traumatic loss of a close relative, combat or war, witnessing a traumatic event, rape, or personal assault. The person has persistent thoughts about the event, and become very fearful, even of those they were once closest to.

~ **Social Anxiety Disorder (a.k.a. Social Phobia):** A person with **social phobia** is overly fearful of social situations, and are often isolated. The person may feel incredibly self-conscious in a crowd, may not be able to speak in front of an audience, or may not wish to eat with other people.

~ **Separation Anxiety** – is developmentally inappropriate and excessive anxiety concerning separation from home or from whom the individual is attached. Onset often occurs before 18 years of age, and early onset can occur before the age of six. It can impact social and academic functioning, as well as other core areas of the person's life.

~ **Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD):** *GAD* is the term for persons who have anxiety with excessive worry and tension that do not fall into the other categories listed above.

What Treatments are Available?

Pharmacological treatments and/or other behavioral health treatment such as outpatient counseling or in-home services for some children, is often prescribed. Even in severe cases, anxiety disorders are treatable. Cognitive-behavioral therapy is often helpful.

Our Clinical Team and Outpatient Team can support you on the road to recovery. We encourage seeking a diagnosis and treatment if anxiety affects you or your loved one. You and your loved ones do not need to suffer.

Let us help you stop fearing your life, and start living it to the fullest.

Information brought to you by Family Behavioral Resources

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