



Help for Anxiety

For some people, anxiety is an occasional occurrence. For others, it is a constant condition.

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) occurs when a person has recurring worrisome thoughts on a persistent basis for six months or more. Sometimes, these thoughts are about things that are unlikely to happen or that are outside the person's control. Additional symptoms of this medical condition include:

- Sleep difficulties or constant fatigue
- Trembling or muscle tension
- Frequent headaches
- Nausea or digestive issues
- Difficulty concentrating
- An inability to relax

Sometimes, people with generalized anxiety disorder may experience a panic attack, which is defined as sudden episode of overwhelming fear. The physical symptoms of a panic attack include shortness of breath, a racing heart, or sweaty palms.

Social anxiety occurs when a person finds it difficult to engage in social events or spend time with other people. Individuals with social anxiety may feel fearful about participating in ordinary school, work, or life-related activities. They may actively avoid situations that require them to interact with other people, such as going to a store or using public transportation.

In addition, people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression may experience anxiety symptoms as a result of their condition.



Whether you experience short-term bouts of anxiety due to specific situations or have a diagnosed anxiety disorder, these tips may help:

- **Plan for stressful situations.** Think of calming phrase that you can repeat when you are feeling stressed. Some people use a physical object to “ground” themselves, such as a piece of jewelry or a talisman that they carry in their pocket.
- **Be honest.** Tell trusted friends or loved ones about your anxiety symptoms and what types of situations may cause them to occur. Explain what they can do to help when you are experiencing an episode.
- **Seek help.** If anxiety is having an impact on your physical health and emotional wellbeing, talk to your healthcare provider. LifeMatters is also available to provide counseling and support. Call anytime.

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