

# ANXIETY

## What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a strong feeling of fear or stress. It is your body's normal "alarm system" to a dangerous situation, such as nearly having a car accident.

However, sometimes the "alarm system" can be out of control, giving you an overwhelming feeling of worry or fear for no reason. When this happens, anxiety can affect your home or work life.

Anxiety can sometimes feel like other problems, such as a heart attack, asthma, or other medical problems.

## Are there different types of anxiety?

There are two main types of anxiety: generalized anxiety and panic attacks. Panic attacks start suddenly and go away after a few minutes. Generalized anxiety disorder is an ongoing sense of worry or dread.

## Symptoms of generalized anxiety

- Change in appetite or weight
- Change in sleeping habits
- Being tired all the time
- Trouble concentrating
- Feeling lightheaded/dizzy
- Shakiness
- Feeling like it is hard to breathe
- Being irritable

## Symptoms of panic attacks

- A feeling of choking
- Pounding in your chest or chest pain
- Racing pulse
- Shortness of breath
- Trembling or shaking
- Sweating
- Tingling in hands or feet

## Treating Anxiety

### How can I treat my anxiety?

Anxiety can be treated, but the treatment is a slow process. Here are some tips to help get you started.

### Try to control your worry

Try not to dwell on what “might” happen. If you find yourself worrying, try to think of something else.

### Relaxation techniques

Try doing yoga, biofeedback, or deep breathing exercises. You can also do a simple routine of muscle relaxation: One by one, tighten each muscle in your body and then relax it completely.

### Get regular exercise

Exercising can release some of the tension in your body. It will also help you feel better overall.

### Get enough sleep

Get at least 7-8 hours per night. Being tired makes anxiety worse.

### Avoid caffeine

Don't drink coffee, tea, or sodas. Don't eat chocolate or take over-the-counter diet pills or weight loss herbs.

### Avoid alcohol or other drugs

These can worsen your anxiety, even though they may seem to relax you at first.

### Get counseling

Sometimes counseling or going to a group meeting can help with anxiety.

### Get a regular doctor

Your own doctor can help you with special medicine and a treatment plan.