

DEALING WITH



ANXIETY

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What is Anxiety?

Do you really understand what anxiety and panic attacks really are? The name Generalized Anxiety Disorder or GAD is given to this disorder which affects more than 6 million people in the U.S. alone. It seems to be more rampant in women than men and can appear at any age. Even children can be diagnosed with this disorder.

Dealing with GAD can be difficult as you may not understand why you are feeling anxious or worried all the time. You often have a feeling of apprehension and find that you are over concerned with daily things that shouldn't bother you at all. This could be to do with money, a family member, trouble at work or your general health. You may actually wake up each morning fearful of what the day ahead might bring.

GAD is not a term or label that is pinned on you quickly. It is normally associated after dealing with being anxious for a period of 6 months or more. You may have trouble relaxing, get spooked easily and generally feel anxious for unknown reasons.

Other signs that anxiety is a problem for you can be not sleeping properly at night. You may find that you suffer from a lot of headaches, muscle aches and pains, sweating, feeling light headed, getting the shakes and are generally tired all the time.

No two people will suffer from GAD in a similar way. You may have a mild case of GAD, which allows you to keep functioning with a little help. If your case is diagnosed as severe then just getting through each day can be extremely difficult.

Treatments include taking medications or undergoing psychotherapy, or even a combination of the two. Again there is no one treatment that works for everyone. Treating this condition can take some time and effort and have you trying all kinds of possible solutions.

The problem with taking anxiety medications is that they can have serious side effects. These include being tired all the time, dealing with impaired balance, possible memory loss and some can be addictive.

Counseling has helped many people and this mainly consists of just talking things out with someone. This way you can try to identify the underlying cause of what is making you anxious. This type of therapy is referred to as cognitive behavioral therapy. The purpose of this therapy is to help you root out the main cause and then teach you management skills. Many times this just consists of replacing negative thoughts with positive ones.

How to Manage Anxiety and Panic Attacks

An anxiety attack normally creeps up on you unexpectedly, all of a sudden you burst into a panic. Many times this happens for no justifiable reason at all. It may have been some trivial thing that caused a panic or anxiety attack to start in the first place. Knowing how to deal with these attacks will make a huge difference in your life.

An anxiety attack is classified as an uncontrollable reaction to a situation. This can happen when you are asked to do something that you are not comfortable with. Like talking in front of a group of people or having to take an elevator. These experiences of panic can affect all areas of your life, including relationships, your happiness and your peace of mind.

If you are having an anxiety attack you may be showing any of the following symptoms:

- Increased heart rate
- Feeling panicked
- Uncontrollable shaking
- Feeling hot

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- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Experiencing nauseous
- Having stomach cramps

There are many more symptoms but these are the most common ones. Knowing how to handle an anxiety or panic attack will allow you to feel better much faster. It will take time to learn how to control your feelings but it can be accomplished.

A panic attack usually takes about 10 minutes to reach its peak and subsides within a half hour. During this time you will be experiencing the above symptoms and will be feeling extremely anxious.

Here is how to deal with an attack:

You must try to tell yourself to relax. It is difficult especially when you feel so out of control but it is vital not to allow yourself to get so caught up in your feelings. Performing deep breathing exercises will help you stay calm. Try focusing on your heartbeat and breathe deeply and slowly until you feel your heart rate slowing down.

Concentrating on your breathing technique keeps your mind diverted from your feelings of panic. Practice deep breathing techniques frequently. So when an anxiety attack does occur you are better prepared to handle it.

Thinking positively during a panic or anxiety attack is very helpful. Don't worry that you are going to faint in front of all your friends over something so simple. Think about something positive and push the negative thoughts into the back of your mind.

One of the best things you can do to cope with an anxiety attack is to exercise more often. Exercise has been proven to be a great stress reliever for the body and mind. Attempt to get in 30 minutes of exercise at least 3 times a week. You will be feeling less stressed and this can help stop a panic attack before it even starts.

Diana Walker Healthy Lifestyles www.diana1.com/anxiety
sunridermom@gmail.com

It also helps to have someone you can trust with your feelings to talk with about your panic attacks. Possibly your spouse or a close friend or family member. Remember opening up and talking about your feelings is another great stress reliever.

Just admit to yourself that you do suffer from anxiety attacks and that you are willing to take steps to learn how to deal with them. This one thing alone will get you on the path to living a stress free life, free from panic or anxiety attacks.

What Triggers a Panic Attack?

There are many things which can cause a panic attack to start. This article will attempt to cover a few of the most common triggers.

Phobias – these can cause an attack to start very quickly. Having to speak in a group setting or do anything about which you feel really uncomfortable can set off a panic attack.

Hyperventilating – over breathing or breathing incorrectly can lead to panic attacks. Your heart beat will increase, you will start to feel light headed and dizzy. This is all due to changes in the amount of oxygen within your bloodstream.

Medications – unfortunately many medications produce side effects which include the symptoms of panic attacks. Trying to deal with one issue unwittingly produces another. If you suspect your medication might be the cause of your panic attacks, see your doctor to get your prescription changed.

Biological reasons – having to deal with certain conditions such as post-traumatic stress, hypoglycemia and inner ear disturbances can cause the person to suffer from a panic attack. Another common reason is living with a Vitamin B deficiency.

Heredity – if your parents have suffered from panic or anxiety attacks, you will be more susceptible to them as well. People with no family history can still develop panic attacks due to other reasons.

Short term triggers – having to deal with a life changing circumstance can also cause panic attacks. Losing a loved one, ending a long term relationship, taking drugs or stimulants and other life changing issues can bring on an anxiety attack at any time.

Stress – trying to cope with too much stress in your life can signal the onset of a panic attack. When life just gets too difficult to handle your body reacts in different ways. Learning how to deal with stress is vital in leading a life without panic attacks.

No two people are alike and that is very true in the way any one can suddenly develop panic attacks. With some people it may only take one trigger to bring on an attack. With others it may take several triggers over a longer period of time before attacks become apparent.

While some people are emotionally stronger and can deal with traumatic experiences better. Others are not and it is through no fault of your own if you start to experience panic attacks. The best thing you can do is to learn how to pinpoint the exact cause of your panic attacks. From here you can learn how to effectively cope with an attack and continue leading a more normal life again.

Self Help Advice for Panic Attacks

If you think you may be suffering from panic attacks there are some self-help treatments that could prove to be very beneficial. It is also highly recommended that you seek medical help to properly diagnose your attacks. Many times panic attack symptoms can be the onset of something entirely different.

You need to be aware that you are suffering from a panic attack, this alone will help make dealing with the attack easier. Panic attacks can happen to anyone at any time and more than likely without any warning. Though once you understand why you are suffering from a panic attack you will be able to identify the trigger of your attack. This allows you to be more prepared for an attack to begin.

There are many causes of panic attacks from chemical imbalances to poor diet to environmental concerns. No one fully understands the causes, they only acknowledge that certain events or emotions cause a person to have a panic attack.

During a panic attack your heart is beating rapidly and you will probably be feeling dizzy, light headed and even nauseous. The first thing you want to do is slow your heart rate down. This can be done by concentrating on breathing deeply. Attempt to breathe in for three counts and then out for three. This deep breathing technique also takes your focus off the panic attack allowing it to be over sooner.

While experiencing a panic attack you must also try to remain calm. Even though your emotions and your body is feeling panicked. You are not going crazy, you are not going to die or collapse in a heap on the floor. Think positively, you will get through this, it will be over in a few minutes.

Stress is well known to be a major cause of panic attacks. If you know a certain situation or even a certain person that makes you feel stressed out, attempt to stay away from them. Avoid unnecessary stressful situations if at all possible.

Sometimes the situation which causes the panic attack just cannot be avoided. When this happens the person suffering from the attack must learn other ways to handle the situation. This might mean talking to a therapist or reading self-help books.

Help is readily available in various forms, the key is finding which method will work for you the best. It might be seeking help from a close friend, reading self-help books and treatment methods, or just going for a weekly relaxing massage.

Your Child and Anxiety Attacks

Children can definitely suffer from fears and anxiety and many times they don't know the reason why. Most of these feelings are normal and can be experienced by anyone regardless of age. The problem occurs when a child suffers from these feelings too often, or the feelings start to be taken out of proportion. If you think

that your child is suffering from anxiety or panic attacks, then it is time to look for help.

Anxiety attacks are a disorder and they need to be dealt with appropriately. There are many signs which will help you identify if your child is suffering from an anxiety attack. You might start noticing any of the following symptoms:

- Bed wetting
- Feeling fearful and panicky too often
- Throwing temper tantrums
- Fits of crying
- Suffering from nightmares
- Not wanting to go to school
- Lack of self confidence
- Becoming too shy
- Suffering from frequent stomach and headaches

Sometimes it can be decidedly tricky to know if your child is having a panic or anxiety attack. Many of the symptoms are also related to the normal behavior of a growing child. However, as a parent you know if your child suddenly starts acting out of character.

During a panic attack your child will exhibit different feelings and these can be seen in the following ways:

- Throwing up
- Experiencing stomach cramps
- Shaking

- Having trouble breathing
- Feeling faint

If any of these symptoms become too frequent then you want to take your child for a medical checkup. Many parents do not want to see their child put on medication for panic or anxiety attacks and look for some type of self-help treatment instead.

Parents should look for help that allows them to interact with their child and build a stronger relationship with them. This can be done by play therapy and herbal or natural remedies.

With play therapy a situation is invoked which the child is fearful of, they are then shown how to deal with the situation without them panicking. It takes time for this to work, but your child will eventually learn how to deal with situations that have made them go into an anxiety attack in the past. By working through this with your child, you are developing trust and a tight bond will be formed.

Lavender is a common herb which is known to be a relaxant and has been shown to help reduce panic and anxiety attacks. St. John's Wart is another popular herbal remedy.

Remember your child needs to learn how to deal with their anxiety attacks and as the parent you need to stay calm and help them through their ordeal. Before you know it the attacks will become less severe and your child will be more relaxed and happy again.

Anxiety Attacks and Teens

Sometimes we forget that teens can easily suffer from anxiety attacks too. We may look at them as having great social lives but we forget about the stress that this can cause them.

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Teens face pressure and anxiety from going on dates, meeting new people, having to speak in groups at school or college and then there is the challenge of writing exams. All of these things can make any teen feel apprehensive and nervous.

Just like adults some teens can handle pressure and anxiety more than others. Issues arise when these feelings of apprehension turn into fear and become just too difficult to handle. This is when anxiety or panic attacks begin to take hold of their lives.

Teens do tend to worry about certain things, far more than adults or younger children, their appearance is a fine example. Being anxious over some things is considered healthy. It is when their emotions take over and the teen becomes worried over small issues that the situation becomes worrisome.

Teens will exhibit the same signs as adults who suffer from anxiety attacks. Chest and body pains, severe headaches, fluctuations in body temperature and rapid heartbeats are all signs that a teen could be showing. Some of these signs could be caused by any medications that your child might be on. First it is wise to rule out these types of causes.

Once the cause of these attacks is identified the anxiety attacks can then be dealt with. There are various ways to do this. For extreme and very severe cases medication is often recommended. This is a method not normally preferred by parents.

A natural or self help remedy for anxiety attacks is usually sought by worried parents. Using cognitive behavior therapy is one popular method. Basically this consists of replacing negative thoughts with positive ones.

Exposure therapy is a controlled way of re-enacting the trigger of the anxiety attack. The whole session is conducted in a controlled environment which is perfectly safe. With repeated sessions, the teen learns how to control their emotions and handle the situation effectively.

There are several natural methods for dealing with anxiety attacks too. Proper diet and exercise allows the body to deal with stress much better. Just ensuring that your teen gets enough sleep each night is a huge help.

There are several breathing techniques which help reduce the severity of the panic attack. Massage and aromatherapy are other forms of relaxation which have proven helpful. Certain herbs such as St. John's Wart and Lavender are particularly effective for many people.

For a teen the biggest self-help is to open up and talk to their parents, knowing that they don't have to deal with their anxiety attacks alone. Plus the fact that realizing that the feelings they are experiencing aren't frowned upon, will be a big help and a confidence booster.

Support Groups

A good way to deal with anxiety is by making use of a support group. Discussing things openly in a group can be extremely beneficial and speed up your recovery. You can feel comforted by the fact that you are not alone and this in turn can raise your self-esteem. Teens and children can benefit from this type of group therapy as well.

At first you or your child may feel nervous about talking in a group session. But as you see other people open up and talk about their feelings then you will feel better about discussing your feelings too.

Support groups can help children and teens understand that they are not alone with their feelings and thoughts. That many other people feel the same way and this can help improve their self-confidence and esteem.

Joining a support group for anxiety can also make you feel less isolated. Try to find a group that has members who are similar in age and gender. This way you can feel a connection to the other members and be more forthcoming with your own feelings.

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Just the act of having to get out of your house and go to a support meeting can make you feel less isolated. Many anxiety sufferers often want to stay away from interacting with others. You cannot do this by joining a support group – you will be expected to show up for regular meetings.

Another benefit to joining a support group is that the moderator is usually a trained medical professional. As well as encouraging members to discuss their feelings, they will offer helpful activities. These will be in the form of showing you how to make lifestyle changes, how to modify some of your behaviors and even educating you on health issues. You will probably be asked to set goals and then work on steps to attain them.

If you decide to join a support group remember that each member is dealing with similar issues and can relate to what you are experiencing. A support group can be a great effective treatment for any person, young or adult. Joining the group will be a huge step for you, but at least you are going in the right direction.

Please be sure to go to <http://diana1.com/anxiety> to learn about the wonderful, delicious and powerful nutrition that I use to deal with Stress and Anxiety.

Wishing you Joyful Health! Diana



Diana Walker Healthy Lifestyles www.diana1.com/anxiety
sunridermom@gmail.com