

# ANXIETY



**Centurion**  
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*Shaping Lives...*  
*Empowering Communities...*

**By**

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

An anxiety disorder is a type of mental health condition. In this condition, we may respond to certain things and situations with fear and dread. We may also experience physical signs of anxiety, such as a pounding heart and sweating.

## **TYPES OF ANXIETY DISORDERS:**

- **Agoraphobia:** It is a type of anxiety disorder in which fear and often avoid places or situations that might cause panic and make you feel trapped, helpless or embarrassed.
- **Anxiety disorder due to a medical condition:** It includes symptoms of intense anxiety or panic that are directly caused by a physical health problem.
- **Generalized anxiety disorder:** It includes persistent and excessive anxiety and worry about activities or events — even ordinary, routine issues. Most days, we may worry a lot about various topics, including health, work, school and relationships. We may feel that the worry continues from one thing to the next.
- **Panic disorder:** It involves repeated episodes of sudden feelings of intense anxiety and fear or terror that reach a peak within minutes (panic attacks). We may have feelings of impending doom, shortness of breath, chest pain, or a rapid, fluttering or pounding heart (heart palpitations).
- **Selective mutism:** It is a consistent failure of children to speak in certain situations, such as school, even when they can speak in other situations, such as at home with close family members. This can interfere with school, work and social functioning.
- **Separation anxiety disorder:** It is a childhood disorder characterized by anxiety that's excessive for the child's developmental level and related to separation from parents or others who have parental roles or from closed one.

- **Social anxiety disorder (social phobia):** It involves high levels of anxiety, fear and avoidance of social situations due to feelings of embarrassment, self-consciousness and concern about being judged or viewed negatively by others.
- **Specific phobias:** They are characterized by major anxiety when exposed to a specific object or situation and a desire to avoid it. Phobias provoke panic attacks in some people.
- **Substance-induced anxiety disorder:** It is characterized by symptoms of intense anxiety or panic that are a direct result of misusing drugs, taking medications, being exposed to a toxic substance or withdrawal from drugs.
- **Other specified anxiety disorder and unspecified anxiety disorder:** They are terms for anxiety or phobias that don't meet the exact criteria for any other anxiety disorders but are significant enough to be distressing and disruptive.

#### CAUSES/ETIOLOGY:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Thyroid problems, such as hyperthyroidism
- Respiratory disorders, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma
- Drug misuse or withdrawal
- Withdrawal from alcohol, anti-anxiety medications (benzodiazepines) or other medications
- Chronic pain or irritable bowel syndrome
- Rare tumors that produce certain fight-or-flight hormones
- **Chemical imbalance:** Severe or long-lasting stress can change the chemical balance that controls your mood. Experiencing a lot of stress over a long period can lead to an anxiety disorder.

- **Environmental factors:** Experiencing a trauma might trigger an anxiety disorder, especially in someone who has inherited a higher risk to start.
- **Heredity:** Anxiety disorders tend to run in families. You may inherit them from one or both parents.

## **PATHOGENESIS:**

- Anxiety develops in the brain due to genetic, environmental, and behavioral factors.
- The amygdala, a small almond-shaped structure in the brain, plays a crucial role in the development of anxiety. It is responsible for processing emotions, especially fear and anxiety, and sending signals to the hypothalamus, which triggers the body's "fight or flight" response.
- In people with anxiety, the amygdala is hyperactive and overreacts to perceived threats, even when there is no real danger present.
- Another important brain region involved in anxiety is the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for regulating emotions and making rational decisions.
- In people with anxiety, this area may be less active, making it more difficult for them to control their fear and worry.
- Serotonin and GABA, two important neurotransmitters in the brain, are also involved in the development of anxiety.
- Serotonin helps regulate mood and feelings of well-being, while GABA calms down excitability in the brain.
- An imbalance in these neurotransmitters can lead to anxiety symptoms.

## **CLINICAL MANIFESTATION/ SYMPTOMS::**

### **Physical symptoms:**

- Cold or sweaty hands.

- GIT discomfort
- Dry mouth.
- Heart palpitations.
- Nausea.
- Numbness or tingling in hands or feet.
- Muscle tension.
- Shortness of breath.

### **Mental symptoms:**

- Feeling panic, fear and uneasiness.
- Nightmares.
- Repeated thoughts or flashbacks of traumatic experiences.
- Uncontrollable, obsessive thoughts.

### **Behavioral symptoms:**

- Inability to be still and calm.
- Ritualistic behaviours, such as washing hands repeatedly.
- Trouble sleeping.

### **DIAGNOSIS/CLINICAL EVALUATION:**

- Physical Examination
- Medical history and Family history

### **PHARMACOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT:**

- **Anti-anxiety medications:** such as benzodiazepines-
  - ✚ **alprazolam (Xanax)**
  - ✚ **chlordiazepoxide (Librium)**
  - ✚ **clonazepam (Klonopin)**
  - ✚ **diazepam (Valium)**
  - ✚ **lorazepam (Ativan)** may decrease your anxiety, panic and worry. They work quickly, but you can build up a tolerance to them. That makes them less effective over time. Your healthcare provider may prescribe an anti-anxiety medication for the short-term.

- **Antidepressants:** Such as **fluoxetine (Prozac)**, **paroxetine (Paxil, Pexeva)**, **sertraline (Zoloft)**, **citalopram (Celexa)** and **escitalopram (Lexapro)** can also help with anxiety disorders. It improve mood and reduce stress. Antidepressants may take some time to work, so be patient.
- **Beta-blockers:** Such as
  - ✚ **Acebutolol.**
  - ✚ **Atenolol (Tenormin)**
  - ✚ **Bisoprolol (Zebeta)**
  - ✚ **Metoprolol (Lopressor, Toprol XL)**
  - ✚ **Nadolol (Corgard)**
  - ✚ **Nebivolol (Bystolic)**
  - ✚ **Propranolol (Inderal, InnoPran XL)** usually used for high blood pressure, can help reduce some of the physical symptoms of anxiety disorders. They can relieve rapid heartbeat, shaking and trembling.

## **NON PHARMACOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT:**

### **Psychotherapy:**

- Also known as talk therapy or psychological counseling, psychotherapy involves working with a therapist to reduce your anxiety symptoms. It can be an effective treatment for anxiety.
- ✚ Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is the most effective form of psychotherapy for anxiety disorders.
- **Get help early.** Anxiety, like many other mental health conditions, can be harder to treat if you wait.
- **Stay active.** Participate in activities that you enjoy and that make you feel good about yourself. Enjoy social interaction and caring relationships, which can reduce your worries.
- **Avoid alcohol or drug use.** Alcohol and drug use can cause or worsen anxiety. If you're addicted to any of these substances,

quitting can make you anxious. If you can't quit on your own, see your doctor or find a support group to help you.