



# What is Anxiety?

We all experience anxiety. However, when feelings of intense fear and distress become overwhelming and prevent us from doing everyday activities, an anxiety disorder may be the cause. With treatment, anxiety disorders can be effectively managed.

## Symptoms

There are several types of anxiety disorders. However, all anxiety disorders have one thing in common: persistent, excessive fear or worry in situations that are not threatening.

**People typically experience one or more of the following symptoms:**

### Emotional symptoms:

- Feelings of apprehension or dread
- Feeling tense or jumpy
- Restlessness or irritability
- Anticipating the worst and being watchful for signs of danger

### Physical symptoms:

- Pounding or racing heart and shortness of breath
- Sweating, tremors and twitches
- Headaches, fatigue and insomnia
- Upset stomach, frequent urination or diarrhea

## Types of Anxiety Disorders

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD):** GAD produces chronic, exaggerated worrying about everyday life. This worrying can consume hours each day, making it hard to concentrate or finish daily tasks.

**Social Anxiety Disorder:** More than shyness, this disorder causes intense fear about social interaction, often driven by irrational worries about humiliation. Panic attacks are a common reaction.

**Panic Disorder:** This disorder is characterized by panic attacks and sudden feelings of terror sometimes striking repeatedly and without warning. Often mistaken for a heart attack, a panic attack causes powerful physical symptoms including chest pain, heart palpitations, dizziness, shortness of breath and stomach upset.

**Phobias:** We all tend to avoid certain things or situations that make us uncomfortable or even fearful. But for someone with a phobia, certain places, events or objects create powerful reactions of strong, irrational fear.

## Treatment

There are many treatments for anxiety disorders including:

- **Psychotherapy**, including cognitive behavioral therapy
- **Medications**, including anti-anxiety medications and anti-depressants
- **Stress and relaxation techniques**

You are not alone. We can help you or someone you love overcome anxiety.

Visit [www.centermh.org/help](http://www.centermh.org/help) to take a fast, confidential online screening test.

*Information provided by the National Alliance on Mental Illness.*



Phone: 970.252.3200