

## Anxiety

Anxiety Disorders are associated with a state of fear that is unreasonable and clearly out of proportion or unrelated to actual danger. People with anxiety disorders feel overwhelming tension when there is often no real danger or they may be overreacting to a non-threatening situation as a result of fear from a similar traumatic event that happened earlier in life. They may take extreme action to avoid the source of their anxiety and often recognize that their fears are exaggerated but are unable to reason their way out of the symptoms.

Everyone feels anxious now and then. An anxiety disorder should not be confused with generalized nervousness or becoming worried about an on coming situation. Anxiety prepares the body to meet a challenge, danger or unfamiliar situation. There is a big difference between everyday anxiety and having an anxiety disorder. In order to be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, a person must be unreasonably and extremely worried about at least two things going on in their life. These worries must continue for 6 months or more and should not be related to another physical or emotional disorder. For example, you may have a persistent fear about something bad that is going to happen when there is no particular objective danger that exists. With anxiety disorders, some of the following symptoms will be present:

- Fatigue
- Dry mouth
- Restlessness
- Racing heart
- Frequent urination
- Shortness of breath
- Trouble concentrating
- Irritability or edginess
- Nausea or stomach distress
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Afraid something will happen
- Trouble falling or staying asleep
- Sweating or cold clammy hands
- Muscle tension, aches and soreness

Anxiety disorders can severely disrupt a person's work, social and family life. Victims often feel they must endure their fears without complaint or risk having others think they are weak or unbalanced. Often they cannot identify what the real source or cause of suffering.

The following are some of the types of anxiety disorders:

- Simple phobias involve an intense specific fear such as fear of flying, snakes or bugs, elevators or other closed spaces, heights, dogs or other animals, etc.
- Social phobia involves an intense fear of being judged by others or doing something that is embarrassing. Some common social phobias are meeting new people, public speaking and using public restrooms.
- Agoraphobia refers to an intense fear of places or situations that don't feel safe or from which escape would be difficult or embarrassing. Some examples might include going anywhere without spouse or friend and being inside a building with a crowd.
- Panic Attacks are sudden overwhelming episodes of terror that happen for no apparent reason. People experiencing panic attacks often have a combination of these symptoms: rapid heart beat, dizziness, hot/cold flashes, chest pain, sweating, nausea, fear of dying, fear of losing control, numbness or tingling, trembling or shaking, shortness of breath.

### **Treatment:**

Counseling is one of the best forms of treatment. The emotional, spiritual, social, and vocational needs should be addressed, as they become appropriate. Techniques are available to find the origin of the anxiety (such as a fear from the past) to eliminate the past trauma and eliminate the anxiety. Medication or natural remedies can also be helpful to help with sleep and the daily symptoms of anxiety.