

# ANXIETY



Anxiety is a mental health disorder characterized by feelings of worry, anxiety, or fear that are strong enough to interfere with one's daily activities.

Anxiety manifests as Panic attacks, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Symptoms include stress that's out of proportion to the impact of the event, inability to set aside a worry, and restlessness. Many people with anxiety experience symptoms of more than one type of anxiety condition, and may experience depression as well.

There are different types of Anxiety. The most common are:

- **Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD):**  
A person feels anxious on most days, worrying about lots of different things, for a period of six months or more.
- **Social Anxiety:**  
A person has an intense fear of being criticized, embarrassed, or humiliated in everyday situations.
- **Phobia:**  
A person feels very fearful about a particular object or situation and may go to great lengths to avoid it. For example, fear of heights confined spaces. There are many different types of phobias.
- **Panic Disorder:**  
A person has panic attacks, which are intense, overwhelming, and often uncontrollable feelings of anxiety combined with a range of physical symptoms - shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, and excessive perspiration.
- **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD):**  
A person has ongoing unwanted/intrusive thoughts and fears that cause anxiety; they often try to relieve their anxiety by carrying out certain behaviors or rituals.
- **Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):**  
This can happen after a person experiences a traumatic event (e.g. war, assault, accident, disaster). Symptoms can include difficulty relaxing, upsetting dreams or flashbacks of the event, and avoidance of anything related to the event.

## How do i know if i have anxiety?

If you are a healthcare or a front-line worker who is working round the clock to help manage the Coronavirus crisis, take a minute out of your grueling schedule and care for yourself too. Look out for the symptoms listed below.

### Physical symptoms:

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- Unexplained fatigue
  - Loss of appetite
  - Sweating, Hyperventilation (breathing rapidly), or Shortness of breath
  - Frequent urination, stomach upsets/diarrhea
  - Headaches, unexplained muscle tension, and aches
  - Constant shaking (legs, hands, fingers), palpitations
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### Psychological symptoms:

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- Irritability or Restlessness
  - Lack of concentration
  - Unexplained, prolonged sadness
  - Overthinking, over analyzing, random unwanted/disturbing thoughts occupying your mind
  - Excessive worrying, fear of impending doom
  - Insomnia, trouble staying asleep, frequent unexplained nightmares
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If any of these resonate with you and are experiencing any symptoms, try some of the self-help techniques given below:

- **Self-care -**

Be sure to eat, drink and sleep regularly. Take Breaks. Give yourself a rest from tending to patients. Whenever possible, allow yourself to do something unrelated to work that you find comforting, fun, or relaxing - Take a walk, listen to music, read a book, watch relaxing content.

- **Self-Check-Ins -**

Monitor yourself overtime for any symptoms of depression or stress disorder: prolonged sadness, difficulty sleeping, intrusive memories, hopelessness. Talk to a peer, supervisor, or seek professional help if needed.

- **Stay in touch with Family -**

They are an anchor of support outside the healthcare system. Sharing and staying connected may help them better support you and keep your concerns over their well-being at bay.

- **Limit Media Exposure -**

Graphic imagery and worrisome messages will increase your stress and may reduce your effectiveness and overall wellbeing.

- **Manage connections, communications -**

Some people need to talk while others need to be alone. Recognize and respect

- these differences in yourself, your patients, and your colleagues. If your colleagues are willing to share, you can talk to them and receive support from one another.

If symptoms persist and/or have been persistent for more than 2 weeks, please get in touch with a therapist. You could also quickly take this [test](#) and self-assess what kind of support you might need.

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Read more about **ANXIETY** and other mental health related articles on

[www.pamllc.us/resources](http://www.pamllc.us/resources)

Interested in a consultation? Request an appointment from our [website](#) or mail at

[telehealth@pamllc.us](mailto:telehealth@pamllc.us)

**NOTE**

If you are in immediate distress or are thinking about hurting yourself, call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline toll-free at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or the toll-free TTY number at 1-800-799-4TTY(4889). You also can text the Crisis Text Line (HELLO to 741741) or go to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline website at <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>



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