

# Anxiety Disorders

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## Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is an anxiety disorder characterized by chronic anxiety, exaggerated worry and tension, even when there is little or nothing to provoke it.

## Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder and is characterized by recurrent, unwanted thoughts (obsessions) and/or repetitive behaviors (compulsions). Repetitive behaviors such as hand washing, counting, checking or cleaning are often performed with the hope of preventing obsessive thoughts or making them go away. Performing these so-called “rituals,” however, provides only temporary relief, and not performing them significantly increases anxiety.

## Panic Disorder

Panic disorder is an anxiety disorder and is characterized by unexpected and repeated episodes of intense fear accompanied by physical symptoms that may include chest pain, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness or abdominal distress.

## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that some people get after seeing or living through a dangerous event. When in danger, it's natural to feel afraid. This fear triggers many split-second changes in the body to prepare to defend against the danger or to avoid it. This “fight-or-flight” response is a healthy reaction meant to protect a person from harm. But in PTSD, this reaction is changed or damaged. People who have PTSD may feel stressed or frightened even when they are no longer in danger.

## Social Phobia (Social Anxiety Disorder)

Social Phobia (Social Anxiety Disorder) is an anxiety disorder characterized by overwhelming anxiety and excessive self-consciousness in everyday social situations. Social phobia can be limited to only one type of situation — such as a fear of speaking in formal or informal situations or eating or drinking in front of others — or, in its most severe form, may be so broad that a person experiences symptoms almost anytime they are around other people.

### Best Practices

Interventions for anxiety disorder treatments include pharmacological and psychosocial interventions. Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) is a type of psychosocial treatment that helps patients to understand the thoughts and feelings that influence behaviors. Pharmacological management includes, most often, prescribing an antidepressant, anti-anxiety medications and beta-blockers.

### Screening Tools and Resources

#### Screening Tools:

GAD-7

[anxietycentre.com](http://anxietycentre.com)

Anxiety Rating Test, Social Anxiety Test, Anxiety Potential Test, Anxiety Disorder Test and Degree of Anxiety Condition Test

#### Resources:

National Alliance on Mental Illness  
[nami.org](http://nami.org)

National Institute of Mental Health  
[nimh.nih.gov](http://nimh.nih.gov)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admin.  
[samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)

American Psychiatric Association  
[healthyminds.org](http://healthyminds.org)



1-888-713-6180

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