

# ANXIETY

HOW TO MANAGE  
& REDUCE SYMPTOMS



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## WHAT IS ANXIETY

Anxiety is a natural and often healthy emotion. However, when a person regularly feels disproportionate levels of anxiety, it might become a medical disorder.

Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, that can be mild or severe. Anxiety disorders form a category of mental health diagnoses and are a group of related conditions, each having unique symptoms.

Anxiety disorders are characterized by a general feature of excessive fear (i.e. emotional response to perceived or real threat) and/or anxiety (i.e. worrying about a future threat) and can have negative behavioral and emotional consequences.

**Symptoms of anxiety disorder can vary depending on the type of disorder, but common symptoms include:**

- Persistent worrying or fear
- Avoiding certain situations
- Physical symptoms such as heart palpitations, sweating, and trembling
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping

There are several types of anxiety disorders, including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, specific phobias, and separation anxiety disorder. Each type has its own specific symptoms and causes, but they all share the common feature of excessive, unrealistic worry and fear.

It is important to note that everyone can experience anxiety, and that some level of anxiety is normal in certain situations, such as before an important test, or during a difficult time in life. However, when symptoms of anxiety interfere with daily life and normal functioning, it may be time to seek professional help.

## WHAT ARE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

Anxiety can manifest in a variety of ways, and the signs and symptoms can vary depending on the type of anxiety disorder and the individual. However, some common signs and symptoms of anxiety include:



- Persistent worrying or fear about various things such as future events, health, finances, or personal safety



- Avoiding certain situations or activities because of the anxiety they cause



- Physical symptoms such as a rapid heartbeat, sweating, trembling, muscle tension, headaches, stomach problems, and fatigue



- Difficulty concentrating or feeling easily distracted



- Difficulty sleeping or insomnia



- Irritability or restlessness



- Feeling on edge or jumpy



- Difficulty controlling the worry



- Feeling as though the worry is out of proportion to the situation

In some cases, an individual may experience a panic attack, which is a sudden and intense episode of fear or anxiety that can include physical symptoms such as a racing heart, chest pain, shortness of breath, and dizziness.

It is important to note that symptoms of anxiety can be caused by other medical conditions or due to the use of certain medications, so it is always best to consult with a healthcare professional to determine the cause of symptoms and to rule out any underlying medical conditions.

# WHAT ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ANXIETY

Anxiety is a general term that refers to feelings of unease, such as worry or fear, that can be mild or severe. There are several different types of anxiety disorders, each with its own set of symptoms and causes. Some of the most common types of anxiety disorders include:

1. **Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD):** This is characterized by excessive, unrealistic worry and fear about everyday events and activities.
2. **Panic Disorder:** This is characterized by recurrent and unexpected panic attacks, which are sudden episodes of intense fear or anxiety.
3. **Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD):** This is characterized by intense fear and anxiety related to social situations, such as public speaking or being around people.
4. **Specific Phobias:** This is characterized by intense fear and avoidance of specific objects or situations, such as heights or flying.
5. **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD):** This is characterized by recurrent and persistent thoughts, impulses, or images that are experienced as intrusive and unwanted, and by repetitive behaviors or mental acts that the person feels driven to perform in response to an obsession or according to rules that must be applied rigidly.

6. **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** This is characterized by symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, and avoidance behaviors that develop after a traumatic event, such as sexual assault, war, or a natural disaster.
7. **Separation Anxiety Disorder:** This is characterized by excessive anxiety regarding separation from home or attachment figures.
8. **Agoraphobia:** This is characterized by intense fear and avoidance of public places, crowded areas or situations that might be difficult to escape or where help may not be available.
9. **Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD):** This is characterized by excessive preoccupation with perceived flaws in one's physical appearance, and repetitive behaviors or mental acts in response to the perceived flaws.

It's important to note that the symptoms and causes of anxiety disorders can vary widely and that it is important to consult with a mental health professional to make a proper diagnosis and to determine the best course of treatment.



## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE ANXIETY

If you are experiencing symptoms of anxiety, there are a number of things that you can do to help manage your symptoms. Here are a few steps you can take:

1. **Seek professional help:** A mental health professional, such as a therapist or counselor, can help you understand your anxiety, identify triggers, and develop coping strategies. They can also provide treatment options such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) or medication.
2. **Practice self-care:** Taking care of yourself is important for managing anxiety. This includes getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, and engaging in regular physical activity. It's also important to avoid alcohol and drugs, which can worsen anxiety symptoms.
3. **Learn relaxation techniques:** Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, yoga, and progressive muscle relaxation can help calm the body and mind.

4. **Challenge negative thoughts:** Anxiety is often characterized by negative and unrealistic thoughts. By identifying and challenging these thoughts, you can reduce the power they have over you and your emotions.

5. **Connect with others:** Talking to someone you trust can help you feel less alone and more understood. It's also important to try to maintain relationships with friends and family and to participate in activities you enjoy.

6. **Make lifestyle changes:** Make changes in your life that can help reduce stress and anxiety, such as reducing workload or learning to manage time better.

It's important to remember that everyone's experience with anxiety is different and that what works for one person may not work for another. It might take some time and experimentation to find the best approach for you, but with the right help and support, it is possible to manage and reduce symptoms of anxiety.



# WHAT ARE VARIOUS TREATMENTS FOR ANXIETY

There are several different treatment options available for anxiety, and the best approach will depend on the individual and the type of anxiety disorder they have. Some common treatment options include:

- 1. Therapy:** Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of therapy that can be effective in treating anxiety disorders. It focuses on identifying and changing negative thought patterns and behaviors that contribute to anxiety. Other forms of therapy such as exposure therapy, mindfulness-based therapy and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) can also be helpful.
- 2. Medication:** Antidepressant and anti-anxiety medications can be prescribed to help manage symptoms. Examples include selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), and benzodiazepines.
- 3. Lifestyle changes:** Making changes to one's lifestyle can help reduce symptoms of anxiety. This can include regular exercise, eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, and limiting alcohol and caffeine intake.

- 4. Complementary and alternative therapies:** Some people find relief with complementary and alternative therapies such as acupuncture, massage, herbal supplements, and aromatherapy.
- 5. Support groups:** Joining a support group with people who have similar issues can provide a sense of community and understanding. It's important to note that it might take some time and experimentation to find the best approach for you, and a combination of therapies may be more effective than one treatment alone. Additionally, it is important to work closely with a healthcare professional to determine the best course of treatment and monitor progress.

# ARE ANTIANXIETY MEDICATION HAVE SIDE EFFECTS

Yes, like most medications, anti-anxiety medications can have side effects. The specific side effects can vary depending on the medication, but some common side effects of anti-anxiety medications include:

- Drowsiness or sedation
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Headaches
- Nausea or stomach upset
- Blurred vision
- Dry mouth
- Insomnia
- Loss of appetite
- Sexual dysfunction
- Constipation

It's important to note that not everyone will experience side effects and that the side effects can be different from person to person. Additionally, some side effects may be temporary and go away over time, while others may be more persistent.

It's important to work closely with a healthcare professional when taking anti-anxiety medications, as they can monitor for side effects, adjust the dosage if necessary, or switch to a different medication if necessary. Additionally, it's important to never stop taking an anti-anxiety medication without first talking to a healthcare professional, as abruptly stopping can lead to withdrawal symptoms.

It's important to let the healthcare professional know about any other medications or supplements that you are taking, as well as any other medical conditions you have, as some medications and supplements can interact with anti-anxiety medications and cause harmful side effects.

# I AM VERY ANXIOUS BUT I DO NOT WANT TO TAKE MEDICINES

What should I do? If you are experiencing symptoms of anxiety but do not want to take medication, there are other treatment options available. Here are a few things you can try:

- 1. Therapy:** Talking to a mental health professional, such as a therapist or counselor, can help you understand and manage your anxiety. They can provide you with coping strategies and techniques to reduce your symptoms. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of therapy that is particularly effective for treating anxiety disorders.
- 2. Relaxation techniques:** Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, yoga, and progressive muscle relaxation can help calm the body and mind.
- 3. Lifestyle changes:** Making changes to your lifestyle, such as exercising regularly, eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, and limiting alcohol and caffeine intake, can help reduce symptoms of anxiety.
- 4. Complementary and alternative therapies:** Some people find relief with complementary and alternative therapies such as acupuncture, massage, herbal supplements, and aromatherapy.
- 5. Support groups:** Joining a support group with people who have similar issues can provide a sense of community and understanding.
- 6. Mindfulness and self-compassion:** Practicing mindfulness and self-compassion can help you become more aware of your thoughts and feelings, and respond to them in a more constructive way.

It's important to remember that everyone's experience with anxiety is different, and that what works for one person may not work for another. It might take some time and experimentation to find the best approach for you, but with the right help and support, it is possible to manage and reduce symptoms of anxiety without the use of medication.



## DO ANTIANXIETY MEDICATIONS MAKE ME DROWSY?

Some anti-anxiety medications, such as benzodiazepines, can cause drowsiness or sedation as a side effect. These medications work by enhancing the activity of a neurotransmitter called GABA in the brain, which can have a calming effect and help to reduce anxiety symptoms. However, this calming effect can also cause drowsiness and make it difficult to concentrate or stay awake.

Other anti-anxiety medications, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs) may cause less drowsiness as a side effect, but it can still occur in some people.

It is important to note that the side effects vary from person to person and not everyone experiences

drowsiness or sedation with these medications. Additionally, some side effects may be temporary and go away over time, while others may be more persistent. If you experience drowsiness or sedation, it is important to talk to your healthcare professional about adjusting the dosage or switching to a different medication that may cause less drowsiness as a side effect.

It's also important to avoid operating heavy machinery or driving while taking anti-anxiety medications, until you know how the medication affects you and you are sure you can do so safely.



## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO REDUCE ANXIETY AFTER TAKING MEDICATIONS

The length of time it takes for an anti-anxiety medication to take effect can vary depending on the individual and the type of medication. Some people may notice a reduction in symptoms within a few days or weeks, while others may not notice a change for several weeks or even months.

For example, benzodiazepines, a class of anti-anxiety medication, tends to work quickly, and can provide relief from symptoms within a few hours to a few days. However, they are generally recommended for short-term use, typically less than 4 to 6 weeks, as they can cause dependence and withdrawal symptoms if used for longer periods.

On the other hand, antidepressants, another class of anti-anxiety medication, may take several weeks or even months before you notice an improvement in symptoms. They are generally recommended for

long-term use, but it's important to continue taking them even if you start to feel better.

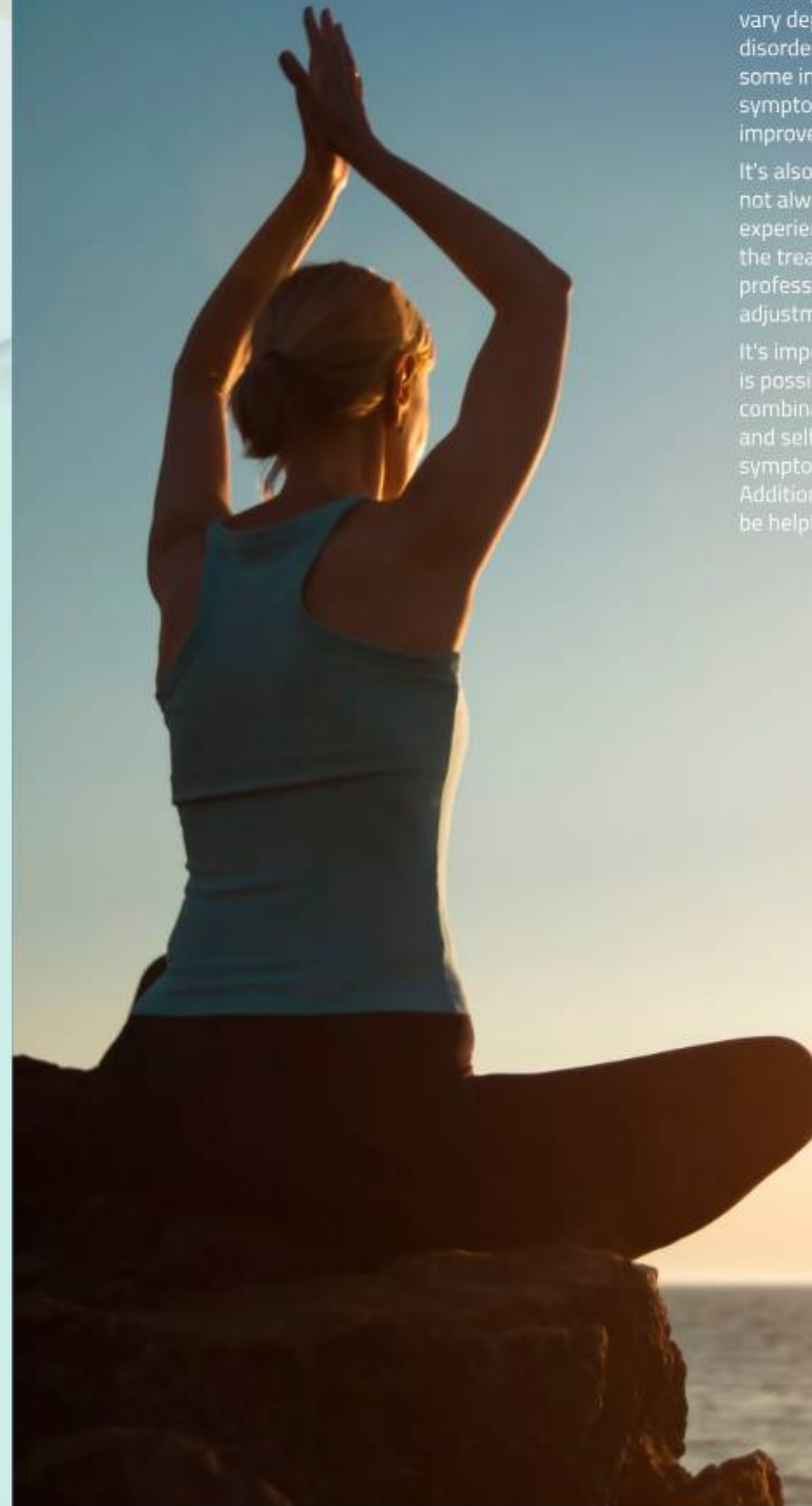
It's important to keep in mind that while medication can help reduce symptoms of anxiety, it's not a cure and it's important to work with a healthcare professional to determine the best course of treatment, and to monitor progress. Additionally, lifestyle changes and therapy can also be helpful in reducing anxiety symptoms.

## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO COME OUT OF ANXIETY

The length of time it takes to recover from anxiety can vary depending on the individual and the type of anxiety disorder. It can take several weeks or even months for some individuals to see a significant improvement in symptoms, while others may experience a more rapid improvement.

It's also important to note that recovery from anxiety is not always a linear process and some individuals may experience setbacks or relapses. The key is to stick with the treatment plan and work closely with a healthcare professional to monitor progress and make adjustments as needed.

It's important to remember that recovery from anxiety is possible, but it may take time and effort. A combination of therapy, medication, lifestyle changes, and self-help strategies can be effective in reducing symptoms and improving overall well-being. Additionally, support from friends and family can also be helpful in the recovery process.



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