

ANXIETY: DIAGNOSIS AND EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS

Anxiety is a normal reaction to stress that everyone experiences at times, and can actually be beneficial in some situations. People may feel anxious or nervous, when faced with a problem at work, before taking a test, or making an important decision. [Anxiety disorders](#), however, are different. They can cause such distress that it interferes with a person's ability to lead a normal life. There are a wide variety of anxiety disorders, including **post-traumatic stress disorder**, **obsessive-compulsive disorder**, and **panic disorder**, to name a few. Collectively, they are among the most common mental disorders experienced by North Americans.

Signs & Symptoms

Unlike the relatively mild, brief anxiety caused by a stressful event (such as speaking in public or a first date), anxiety disorders last at least 6 months and can get worse if they are not treated. Symptoms vary depending on the type of anxiety disorder, but general symptoms include:

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- Feelings of panic, fear and uneasiness
- Problems sleeping
- Cold or sweaty hands and/or feet
- Shortness of breath
- [Heart palpitations](#)
- An inability to be still and calm
- [Dry mouth](#)
- Numbness or tingling in the hands or feet
- [Nausea](#)
- Muscle tension
- [Dizziness](#)

Effective therapies for anxiety

- **Medication:** includes antidepressants, anti-anxiety drugs, and beta-blockers.
- **Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy:** CBT consists of a 2-part treatment; Cognitive strategies help change thinking patterns that support your fears, and Behavioral strategies help change how you react to anxiety-provoking situations.
- **Other Treatments:** Stress management techniques and meditation can help people with anxiety disorders calm themselves and may enhance the effects of therapy.

(Contents adapted from the National Institute of Mental Health)

Anxiety often goes untreated because people may think they are experiencing physical pain, or may hide their symptoms because they feel ashamed. I have worked with people with anxiety for over fifteen years. With psychotherapy, people can learn to handle their stress more effectively and symptoms decrease. They begin to feel calmer and more in control and are able to engage in life. If you or someone you know wants to make a change but isn't sure where to start, I can help. I work towards your goals so that you can achieve change.

For more information or to make an appointment, contact:

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