



Facts about Anxiety Disorders

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

What Are Anxiety Disorders?

Sometimes, working through your thoughts logically can help. For instance, if you're in a room and the room seems to start closing in or feeling tight, try to think about the actual air flow. There's probably a form of ventilation, there's a lot of air within the room, and the people in that room aren't using all of the oxygen they inhale; part of the oxygen in the air that is inhaled is exhaled as waste. So, there's no risk for suffocation at all. Thinking through something logically and looking for areas you can use that conflict with your negative thoughts is one way to help you cope when you start to feel an anxiety attack come on.

WHAT ARE ANXIETY DISORDERS?

ANXIETY DISORDERS are a group of mental health conditions characterized by excessive, persistent, and often irrational fear and worry. These disorders can significantly impact a person's daily life, relationships, and overall well-being.

COMMON SYMPTOMS include:

- Excessive, persistent, and often irrational fear and worry
- Restlessness, feeling on edge, or being easily startled
- Rapid heartbeat, sweating, trembling, or shortness of breath
- Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank
- Irritability or frustration
- Physical symptoms such as dizziness, lightheadedness, or chest pain
- Avoidance of situations or places that trigger anxiety

FACTS AND STATISTICS:

- Approximately 1 in 10 people experience an anxiety disorder at some point in their life.
- With 150 million affected globally.
- People with anxiety disorders are 2-3 times more likely to be hospitalized for respiratory disorders, but more unlikely to be hospitalized for heart disease.
- Overall, anxiety disorders are the leading cause of disability worldwide.
- 55.2% of all people with anxiety disorders are not receiving treatment.
- 70% of people with anxiety disorders are not receiving treatment.

THE HISTORY OF ANXIETY DISORDERS

The history of anxiety disorders is rooted in ancient times, with various cultures and religions offering explanations for the experience of intense fear and worry. The concept of anxiety as a medical condition emerged in the 19th century, largely due to the work of Sigmund Freud and his theories of psychoanalysis.

Key historical milestones include:

- 1800:** The term "anxiety" was first used in a medical context by the German physician Wilhelm Griesinger.
- 1859:** Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis revolutionized the understanding of mental health, suggesting that anxiety is a result of unconscious conflicts and fears.
- 1908:** The term "anxiety disorder" was first used in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).
- 1952:** The DSM-II introduced the term "anxiety disorder" and listed several types, including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and agoraphobia.
- 1968:** The DSM-II-R introduced the term "anxiety disorder" and listed several types, including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and agoraphobia.
- 1980:** The DSM-III introduced the term "anxiety disorder" and listed several types, including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and agoraphobia.
- 1987:** The DSM-III-R introduced the term "anxiety disorder" and listed several types, including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and agoraphobia.
- 1994:** The DSM-IV introduced the term "anxiety disorder" and listed several types, including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and agoraphobia.
- 2013:** The DSM-5 introduced the term "anxiety disorder" and listed several types, including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and agoraphobia.

ANXIETY DISORDERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Anxiety disorders have become a significant public health concern in the 21st century, with prevalence rates increasing globally. This rise is attributed to a combination of factors, including changes in lifestyle, environmental stressors, and advances in diagnostic criteria.

Key trends include:

- Increasing Prevalence:** The prevalence of anxiety disorders has risen significantly over the past few decades, with estimates ranging from 10% to 15% of the population.
- Global Burden:** Anxiety disorders are now a leading cause of disability worldwide, contributing to a significant burden of disease.
- Impact on Quality of Life:** Anxiety disorders can severely impact a person's quality of life, affecting their ability to work, study, and maintain relationships.
- Comorbidity:** Anxiety disorders often co-occur with other mental health conditions, such as depression and substance use disorders.

HOW IS ANXIETY DISORDER TREATED?

The treatment of anxiety disorders typically involves a combination of psychotherapy and medication. The choice of treatment depends on the type and severity of the disorder, as well as the individual's preferences and medical history.

Common treatment options include:

- Psychotherapy:** This involves working with a therapist to explore the underlying causes of anxiety and develop coping strategies. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a widely used and effective approach.
- Medication:** Medications, such as antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs, can help manage symptoms and improve mood.
- Lifestyle Changes:** Regular exercise, a healthy diet, and good sleep hygiene can all contribute to better mental health.
- Support Groups:** Joining a support group can provide a sense of community and shared experiences.

GLOBAL BURDEN OF ANXIETY DISORDERS

Anxiety disorders represent a significant global burden of disease, contributing to a large number of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) lost each year. The burden is particularly high in low and middle-income countries, where access to mental health services is often limited.

Key findings include:

- High Prevalence:** Anxiety disorders are among the most prevalent mental health conditions globally, with estimates ranging from 10% to 15% of the population.
- Disability:** Anxiety disorders are a leading cause of disability, contributing to a significant burden of disease.
- Global Inequity:** There is a significant gap in the availability and quality of mental health services between high-income and low-income countries.
- Need for Action:** Increased efforts are needed to improve the diagnosis and treatment of anxiety disorders, particularly in underserved populations.