Chronic Pain and Anxiety

by EMILY JASON

What is the relationship between anxiety and chronic pain?

Anxiety is well known and with nearly 20% of population suffering is also one of the most common mental issue problem today. Anxiety and anxiety disorders are mostly known for their emotional and psychological symptoms. Even though that the psychological symptoms are most common in terms of anxiety there are numerous physical symptoms that you can experience. The most frequent are nausea, dizziness, shortness of breath and palpitations.

It is a less known fact though that anxiety can cause or aggravate an actual intense chronic pain.

What Comes First, Anxiety or Pain?

It is still difficult to tell which one is the cause and which is the outcome. In many cases people who suffer from intense chronic pain may develop anxiety as a result of the constant stress due to the pain that they are constantly experiencing. In many cases this kind of anxiety can last longer even after the pain is gone.

The opposite case is when anxiety or anxiety disorder can be the cause for actual chronic pain. People who live with anxiety often are very concerned about their health and pay high attention to every physical symptom that they experience. This condition is called hypersensitivity. People who live with anxiety and are hypersensitive tend to exaggerate in their thought every condition that they go through. And a simple headache can develop in chronic migraine for example. It is proven that when people with anxiety focus their attention on some kind of physical condition or pain that they are experiencing (even mild ones) can actually worsen their condition.

Different Pains Related to Anxiety

There is no a unique list of types of pains that someone with anxiety may experience. Anxiety comes with as many different symptoms as many people experience it. Here we'll mention some of the most common pains that can be cause by anxiety and evolve in chronic pain if you do not pay attention at a time:

Stomach pain: Stomach pain is maybe the most common pain that you may feel if you suffer from anxiety. Often it is result of the poor diet that people with anxiety follow. It can follow two major directions. Anxious people may start eating less and less – once or twice per day or vice versa began eating more and more due to their anxiety issues. Both practices can result of indigestion and chronic stomach pain. In most cases people with anxiety also suffer from hyperventilation which can cause bloating and also lead to stomach pain.

Severe headaches: In most cases people who live with anxiety experience severe headaches. This is due to the fact that stress is amongst the most common factor for headaches. The problem is that in many cases these headaches can evolve in severe migraines if not take any precautions.

Muscle pain: Another frequently experienced pain among people with anxiety is muscle pain. This is due the fact

that anxiety causes muscle tension which evolves in muscle pain. This in many cases can evolve in joint pain and/or back pain.

Chest pain: Chest pain is one of the most common and really terrifying symptoms of anxiety. The cause for anxiety chest pain is hyperventilation which is frequent with people who suffer from anxiety. Often people who experience chest pain due to anxiety think that this is a sign of heart attack which actually increases anxiety.

Treatment for Anxiety and Pain

When it comes to chronic pain which is the cause for your anxiety the best thing that you can do is visit your doctor for a consultation and choose the best plan for treating your pain. Without the chronic pain as a root cause for your anxiety it will be gone soon too.

If you have the opposite case in which anxiety is causing your pains you will have to deal with the anxiety itself. If you are trying to take pain killers this will only help you for the moment to deal with the pain symptoms but they will be back with the next anxiety attack or whenever you are feeling anxious. There are several steps that you may take to relief your anxiety but if it is also causing pain it is recommended to visit a therapist in combination with your efforts for reaching the best results.