

## What is Anxiety Disorder?

Anxiety is a normal reaction to stress characterized by thoughts of apprehension and autonomic symptoms such as sweating, palpitation, tremor and butterflies in the stomach.

This is useful for a person in day to day life in most of the cases, for example.....

### It helps...

A student to study harder for an exam,

An employee to deal with a tensed situation in the office,

A person to keep focused on an important speech.....

But when this **Anxiety becomes excessive and disabling, thus affecting day to day functions.....**, it becomes an **Anxiety disorder**.

### Five major types of Anxiety Disorders:

1. Generalized Anxiety Disorder
2. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
3. Panic Disorder
4. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
5. Specific Phobic Disorders (Including Social Phobia)

### Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Generalized Anxiety Disorder, is characterized by

- Chronic free floating anxiety,
- Increased worry and tension, even when there is very little or even nothing to provoke it.
- General worries are accompanied by fatigue, headache, muscle tension, muscle aches, difficulty in swallowing, trembling, irritability, sweating, etc

### Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is characterized by recurrent, unwanted thoughts and/or repetitive behaviors.
- Repetitive behaviors such as hand washing, with counting, checking, or cleaning are often performed the hope of preventing obsessive thoughts.
- Doing so, may provide only temporary relief, but not performing those increases Anxiety markedly.

## **Panic Disorder**

- Panic disorder is characterized by sudden attacks of terror, usually accompanied by a fast beating heart, sweat, weakness, dizziness, nausea and chest pain.
- During these attacks, people may feel chilled, their hands and legs may tingle or feel numb.
- Panic attacks usually produce a sense of unreality, or a fear of losing control.
- Fear of impending doom or death

## **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

- Post-traumatic stress disorder develops after being involved in a catastrophic incident or witnessing a catastrophic event.
- Patient may become emotionally numb, lose interest in things he used to enjoy, have trouble feeling affectionate, become irritable and more aggressive, or may even violent.
- They try to avoid situations that remind them of the original incident.
- There is marked tendency to vigilant and startled easily

## **Specific Phobic Disorders (Including Social Phobia)**

- A specific phobia is an intense, irrational fear of something that poses little or even no actual danger.
- Some of the more common specific phobias are centered around closed-in places, heights, escalators, tunnels, highway driving, water, flying, dogs, insects and injuries involving blood.
- Five main types of specific phobias are Animal, Natural environment, Blood-Injection-Injury, Situational and Other.
- Individuals with specific phobias tend to report anxiety about the sensations, racing heart, breathlessness, dizziness, losing control, etc
- While adults with phobias realize that these fears are irrational, they often find that facing, or even mere thinking about the feared object or situation, brings on a panic attack or severe anxiety.

## **Social Phobia**

- Social Phobia occurs when people become over anxious and excessively self-conscious in everyday social situations.
- People with social phobia have an intense fear of being watched or judged by others and of doing things that will embarrass them.
- This fear may become so severe that it interferes with work, school, and other ordinary daily activities, and can make it hard to make and keep friends.
- Physical symptoms include blushing, profuse sweating, shivering, trembling, nausea, and difficulty in talking.
- When these symptoms occur, people with social phobia feel as though all eyes are focused on them.



## Treatment

- In general, anxiety disorders are treated with medication,
- Specific types of psychotherapy, or both.
- Medication can keep the anxiety disorders under control while the person receives psychotherapy.
- The medications used for anxiety disorders are antidepressants, anti-anxiety drugs, and beta-blockers to control some of the physical symptoms.
- With proper treatment, many people with anxiety disorders can lead normal, fulfilling lives.

