

What is anxiety?

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure

Worry and anxiety are different-

- Worry is when we experience daily concerns and anxiety around situations or events such as taking a test or going for an interview
- Anxiety is when that worried feeling lingers and is more persistent for a longer period of time, and impacts our day-day life dramatically

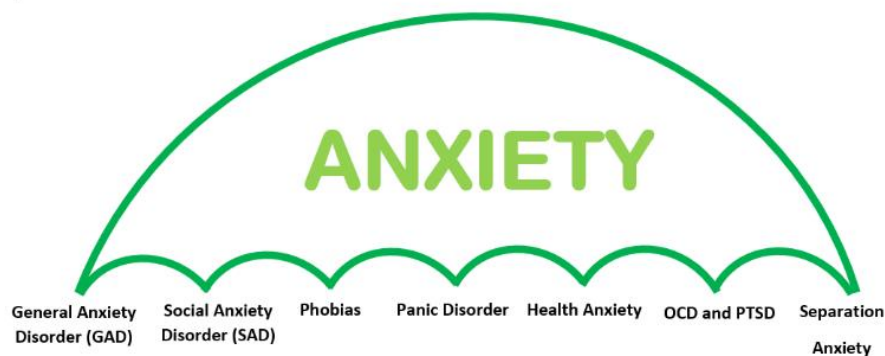
Symptoms of anxiety

Feelings and emotions:

- Nervousness/ on edge
- Sleep disturbances
- Shaking
- Increased heart rate
- Out of control
- Overwhelmed
- Sense of dread
- Difficulty concentrating
- Tired/grumpy

Behaviours:

- Withdrawal
- Avoidance of situations
- List making
- Ritualistic behaviour
- Teary/emotional
- Angry outbursts
- Scratching/biting one self
- Fidgeting/pacing



GAD

- Most common
- General sense of anxiety about variety of activities
- 6 months + for diagnosis
- Causes include family history, brain chemical imbalance, previous trauma, long-term health conditions

Social anxiety disorders

- Fear of social situations or being exposed to unfamiliar person
- Fear of being humiliated or embarrassing oneself
- Will avoid social situations such as performing, answering in class, phone calls, eating in front of others
- Will often see outbursts of anger, tearfulness, panic attacks, avoidance, and sweating in CYP with SAD

Phobias

- Persistent fear that is *excessive or unreasonable*, cued by the presence or anticipation of a specific object or situation
 - Animal phobias: dogs, insects, snakes or rodents.
 - Phobias of the natural environment: heights, water, darkness, storms or germs.
 - Situational phobias: flying, going to the dentist, tunnels, small spaces or escalators.
 - Body-based: blood, injections
 - Other: choking, vomiting, contracting illnesses; in children, loud noises, costumed characters
- Causes include previous trauma, genetics, and learned responses

Panic Disorder

- a discrete period of intense fear or discomfort in which symptoms develop abruptly and reach a peak within 10 minutes
- symptoms include: shaking, increased heart rate, sweating, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea and dizziness, numbness
- Video explaining panic attacks and what to do:
 - [How to help your friend during a panic attack - BBC - YouTube](#)
- How can we help?
 - Listen, reassure they are okay and be patient
 - Distract them
 - What are they doing at the weekend? Whats for tea?
 - Guide them through breathing techniques
 - 5 finger breathing, out breath longer than in breath
 - Grounding techniques
 - Name 5 things of each of the sense
 - ASK THEM- how can I help you personally?

Illness Anxiety disorder

- Preoccupation with having or acquiring illness
- Significant increase in this due to COVID
- Seek further support for help on this topic
- Excessive health related behaviours eg checking self for illness vs maladaptive avoidance eg not going to the doctors when sick

OCD

- NOT classed as anxiety disorder- stand alone condition
- Recurrent thoughts and urges
- Attempts made to suppress urges eg hand washing, order checking, praying, counting, repeating tasks
- Causes
 - Family history, trauma, brain differences, some personality types
- Treatment of CBT and medication

Strategies:

- Practice breathing techniques BEFORE anxiety attack hits- youtube videos
- Diary to learn their triggers
- Take time for self care
- Grounding techniques
 - Five senses
 - Colouring labelling (name 5 of X colour in this room)
- Apps include Calm, Whats up?, and ClearFear

Video links:

What does anxiety mean to you?

[De La Salle School Y8 Group 1 - YouTube](#)

Video explaining panic attacks and what to do:

[How to help your friend during a panic attack - BBC - YouTube](#)