

## Educational Links (English):

- ❖ <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/PDF/Anxiety%20leaflet.pdf>
- ❖ <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/anxiety-disorders/index.shtml>
- ❖ <https://www.adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/generalized-anxiety-disorder-gad>
- ❖ <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/generalized-anxiety-disorder/basics/definition/con-20024562>
- ❖ <http://www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/guide/generalized-anxiety-disorder>
- ❖ <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyounginfo/youngpeople/worriesandanxieties.aspx>
- ❖ <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyounginfo/parentsandyounginfo/worriesandanxieties.aspx>

*Lumos Psychiatric Services*



## Educational Booklet: Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Fear and anxiety are part of life. A person may feel anxious before taking an exam or walking down a dark street. This type of anxiety is useful because it allows us to be more alert or more careful. It usually ends shortly after it comes out of the situation that caused it.

However, for many people anxiety does not go away and worsens over time thus developing anxiety disorders.

Unlike relatively mild and transient anxiety caused by a stressful event, anxiety disorders last at least six months and can get worse if left untreated.

### Different anxiety disorders include:

- ❖ Panic disorder
- ❖ Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- ❖ Post-traumatic stress disorder
- ❖ Social Phobia (Social Anxiety Disorder) and Specific Phobias
- ❖ Generalized anxiety disorder

### What is Generalized Anxiety Disorder?

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is a mental health condition characterized by a pattern of frequent and persistent anxiety and worry in relation to many events or situations.

People with this disorder are constantly worried, afraid that the worst will happen, and they can't relax. Sometimes the concern is not caused by anything specific, but still the person feels tense and worried all day. Symptoms should last for at least 6 months.



6001 Vineland Road Suite 109, Orlando FL 32819  
Phone: (407) 930-6684 / Fax: (949) 404-8433

## Symptoms of Generalized Anxiety Disorder

- ❖ Chronic and exaggerated concern
- ❖ Agitation
- ❖ Tension
- ❖ Irritability
- ❖ Concentration problems
- ❖ Sleep problems
- ❖ Physical symptoms such as tremors, headache, dizziness, muscle tension, aches, abdominal discomfort and sweating

## Students indicate that...

- ❖ Generalized anxiety disorder can begin in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood.
- ❖ It is more common in women than in men.
- ❖ It is probably caused by a combination of biological and environmental factors.
- ❖ Depression and drug addiction can occur in conjunction with anxiety disorders.

## Treatment of Generalized Anxiety Disorder:

Generalized anxiety disorder is a condition that can be treated with medication or psychological therapy. The best results are obtained with a combination treatment.

- ❖ **Medications** - Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors are the first treatment option. Other antidepressants, benzodiazepines or anxiolytics and some anticonvulsants may be used.
- ❖ **Psychotherapy** - The effectiveness of behavioral-cognitive therapies is common. Therapy aims to:
  - ❖ Increase understanding and control over distorted and stressful thoughts.
  - ❖ Learn to recognize and replace thoughts that cause panic.
  - ❖ Learn how to manage stress using relaxation techniques.
  - ❖ Learn not to think that minor concerns will turn into serious problems.

## What other things will help you manage your symptoms?

- ❖ Avoiding caffeine, illicit drugs, and even some cold medications can help reduce symptoms.
- ❖ A healthy lifestyle that includes exercise, sufficient rest, and good nutrition can help reduce anxiety.

## Remember:

- ❖ If you think you have an anxiety disorder, the first person you should consult is your doctor. A doctor will be able to determine whether the symptoms that alarm you are due to an anxiety disorder, another medical condition, or both.
- ❖ If an anxiety disorder is diagnosed, the next step is usually to consult a mental health professional.
- ❖ Once you start medicines, it is important not to abruptly discontinue them. Certain medications should be reduced gradually under the supervision of a doctor or negative reactions may occur.
- ❖ Many people with anxiety disorders benefit from joining a self-help or support group and sharing their problems and accomplishments with others.
- ❖ Stress management and meditation techniques can help you calm down and can improve the effects of therapy.
- ❖ Aerobic exercises can have a calming effect.
- ❖ Caffeine, illegal drugs, and even some unprescribed cold medications should be avoided as they can aggravate symptoms of anxiety disorders.
- ❖ Your family or friends can be a great source of support.

**For questions or concerns, discuss it with your doctor.**