

# Anxiety Disorder

## Contact a Health Care Provider If:

- You feel suicidal and are making a plan to commit suicide.
- You are drinking or using drugs to stop the pain from your depression.
- You feel your body is physically reacting to your anxiety.
- You are thinking about hurting others and are making a plan to do so.
- You believe the world would be better off without you in it.
- You are isolating yourself completely and not talking with anyone.
- You stop having the urge to eat and/or drink
- You begin to see or hear things that are not present

## Crisis Resources:

You can go to your nearest emergency department or call:

- Delaware statewide crisis line 1-800-577-2484
- National suicide crisis helpline 1-800-273-8255
- Your local emergency services 911

## Crisis Centers:

You can go to any of these crisis centers open 24 hours, 7 days a week

### New Castle County

Mobile Crisis Center  
14 Central Ave  
New Castle, DE 19702  
302-577-2484

Recovery Response Center  
659 E. Chestnut Hill Rd  
Newark, DE 19713  
302-318-6070

Rockford Center  
100 Rockford Drive  
Newark, DE 19713  
302-996-5480

Meadowwood Behavioral Health  
575 South Dupont HWY  
New Castle, DE 19702  
302-213-3568

### Kent and Sussex County

Recovery Response Center  
700 Main Street  
Ellendale, DE 19941  
1-800-435-6785

Dover Behavioral Health  
725 Horsepond Road  
Dover, DE 19901  
302-741-0140

Sun Behavioral Health  
21655 Biden Ave  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
302-604-5600

## **What Is Anxiety?**

Anxiety disorder, is a when people often feel nervous, afraid, or embarrassed when they are around other people in social situations, or by themselves. They worry that other people are judging or criticizing them for how they look, what they say, or how they act. They worry about their family and friends as though it is life or death.

Anxiety disorder is more than just occasional shyness or self-consciousness. It can cause severe emotional distress. It can interfere with daily life activities. Anxiety disorder also may lead to alcohol or drug use and even suicide.

Social anxiety disorder is a common mental disorder. It can develop at any time, but it usually starts in the teenage years.

## **What are the causes?**

The cause of this condition is not known. It may involve genes that are passed through families. Stressful events may trigger anxiety. Poor emotional regulation.

## **What increases the risk?**

This condition is more likely to develop in:

- People who have a family history of anxiety disorders.
- People who have a condition that makes them feel self-conscious or nervous, such as a stutter or a chronic disease.

## **What are the signs or symptoms?**

The main symptom of this condition is fear of being criticized or judged in situations. You may be afraid to:

- Speak in public.
- Go shopping.
- Use a public bathroom.
- Eat at a restaurant.
- Go to work.
- Interact with unfamiliar people.

Extreme fear and anxiety may cause physical symptoms, including:

- Blushing.
- Racing heart.
- Sweating.
- Shaky hands or voice.
- Confusion.
- Light-headedness.
- Upset stomach, diarrhea, or vomiting.
- Shortness of breath.

## **How is this diagnosed?**

Your health care provider can diagnose this condition based on your history, symptoms, and behavior in social situations. Your health care provider may ask you about your use of alcohol or drugs, including prescription medicines. Your health care provider may refer you to a mental health specialist for further evaluation or treatment.

## **How is this treated?**



Treatment for this condition may include:

- Cognitive behavioral therapy. This type of talk therapy helps you learn to replace negative thoughts and behaviors with positive ones. This may include learning better coping skills and ways to control anxiety.
- Exposure therapy. You will be exposed to social situations that cause fear. The treatment starts with situations that you can manage. Over time, you will learn to manage harder situations.
- Antidepressant medicines. These medicines may be used for a short time along with other therapies.
- Beta blockers. These medicines may help to control anxiety.
- Biofeedback. This process trains you to manage your body's response (physiological response) through breathing techniques and relaxation methods. You will work with a therapist while machines are used to monitor your physical symptoms.
- Relaxation and coping techniques. These include deep breathing, self-talk, meditation, visual imagery, and yoga. Relaxation techniques help to keep you calm in social situations.

These treatments are often used in combination.

## **Follow these instructions at home:**

- Take over-the-counter and prescription medicines only as told by your health care provider.
- Practice relaxation and coping strategies as taught by your health care provider.
- Return to social activities as suggested by your health care provider.
- Keep all follow-up visits as told by your health care provider. This is important.

## **Contact a health care provider if:**

- Your symptoms do not improve.
- Your symptoms get worse.
- You have signs of depression, such as:
  - A persistently sad, cranky, or irritable mood.
  - Loss of enjoyment in activities that used to bring you joy.
  - Change in weight or eating.
  - Changes in sleeping habits.
  - Avoiding friends or family members.
  - Loss of energy for normal tasks.
  - Feelings of guilt or worthlessness.

- You become very isolated.
- You find it very hard to speak or interact with others.
- You are using drugs.
- You are drinking more alcohol than normal.

### **Get help right away if:**

- You self-harm.
- You have suicidal thoughts.

**If you ever feel like you may hurt yourself or others, or have thoughts about taking your own life, get help right away. You can go to your nearest emergency department or call:**

- **Your local emergency services (911 in the U.S.).**
- **A suicide crisis helpline, such as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. This is open 24 hours a day.**

### **Summary**

- Anxiety disorder may cause you to feel nervous, afraid, or embarrassed when you are around other people in social situations.
- Anxiety disorder is a common mental disorder. It can develop at any time, but it usually starts in the teenage years.
- Treatment includes talk therapy, exposure therapy, medicines, biofeedback, relaxation techniques, or a combination of two or more treatments.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.