



## Phobias:

A phobia is an uncontrollable, and irrational fear of a certain object, situation, or activity. This fear can be so overwhelming that a person may go to great lengths to avoid the source of this fear. One response can be a panic attack. This is a sudden, intense fear that lasts for several minutes. It happens when there is no real danger.

**My Health**  
**Digest**



## **Causes:**

Scientists think that both genetic and environmental factors contribute to the start of phobias. Certain phobias have been linked to a very bad first experience with the feared object or situation. Mental health experts don't know if this first encounter is necessary or if phobias can simply occur in people who are likely to have them.

## **Risk factors:**

People with a genetic predisposition to anxiety may be at high risk of developing a phobia. Age, socioeconomic status, and gender seem to be related only for certain phobias. For example, women are more likely to have animal phobias. Children or people with a low socioeconomic status are more likely to have social phobias. Men make up the majority of those with dentist and doctor phobias.





## **Symptoms:**

- Fast heart beating
- Shortness of breath
- Rapid speech or inability to speak
- Dry mouth
- Upset stomach
- Nausea
- High blood pressure
- Shaking
- Chest pain or tightness
- A choking sensation
- Dizziness
- Profuse sweating

## **Treatment:**

Cognitive behavioral therapy:

It involves exposure to the source of the fear in a controlled setting.

Medication:

Antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications can help calm emotional and physical reactions to fear.

