

What Is Generalized Anxiety Disorder?

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Everyone worries from time to time about all kinds of things. Worry itself is quite normal. Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a condition of too much worrying. If anxious thoughts seem to be increasing, it may signal a problem. Worry has to do with fears. Sometimes worrying can occur even when there is no clear cause. Fears can be confusing and may not make sense to the person who has them.

Fears may be based on real issues, but when worry becomes troubling enough that it is affecting sleep, appetite, concentration, ability to work, or ability to have relationships, it may be GAD.

How do I know if I have it?

One way to think about the severity of worry or anxiety is to ask the following questions:

- “How is anxiety affecting my ability to function?”
- “Is it interfering with how I interact with people I love?”
- “Is it creating health concerns?”
- “Is it impairing parenting or work or school?”
- “How much time do I spend worrying each day?”

If anxiety is leading to constant worrying it may be GAD. Perhaps thoughts often become negative and frightening. GAD occurs more often in women than in men. It can be a condition passed on from one generation to the next.

There are some common traits that most people with GAD share. They include: a negative outlook on how things will turn out, a desire to be accepted by everyone, and a feeling that things must be “perfect.” Anxious people tend to feel there is a way that they “should” be. Also, often people with anxiety lack stress management skills. People with GAD often have exhaustion from ignoring body signs that stress is building and resulting in constant anxious thinking.

Examples of anxious thinking:

- “I will never finish this work, and my job depends on it.”
- “What if he doesn’t like me?”
- “Nothing I do ever turns out well. What if I can’t cope?”
- “I can’t concentrate or get anything done.”

In addition to anxious thoughts, people with GAD experience some of these symptoms:

- inability to fall asleep, stay asleep or awakening too early

- feeling fearful and engaging in behaviors like use of drugs or alcohol to avoid problems
- experiencing stomachaches, headaches, tense muscles and teeth grinding at night
- taking no enjoyment or satisfaction in activities you normally enjoy because of worrying about the future
- appetite change
- rapid heartbeat even when sitting calmly
- difficulty making decisions because of overthinking
- scary and overwhelming thoughts

GAD is fairly common, and there are lots of reasons why you might experience it. Reaching out for help is an important first step in managing your anxiety.

Treatment for GAD can involve taking medicine, learning relaxation techniques and other stress management techniques, and practicing spiritual practices. Improving self-esteem and confidence can also help in overcoming GAD. Most people recover from GAD, but the process can be long. GAD may feel overwhelming, but there are many ways to manage it.

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peful. It is treatable and can get better.
from GAD.

therapy. Recovery may also mean kills. Some people find help from urate thoughts can also be helpful in mbination of therapy and medication. ondition can improve.