

# HEALTH IN OUR HANDS!

The Arkansas State University Wellness Program Newsletter  
[www.astate.edu/conhp](http://www.astate.edu/conhp)



## Anxiety Awareness

### Introduction

Experiencing some anxiety throughout life is normal. But when anxiety starts to interfere with daily life it becomes a problem. Anxiety is said to be the most common mental disorder around the world. In the United States alone, there are 40 million people diagnosed with an anxiety disorder each year. Globally, 1 in 13 people will be diagnosed with some type of anxiety disorder. The majority of those diagnosed with an anxiety disorder experience symptoms before the age of 21. Women are more likely to be diagnosed than men.

### Common Forms of Anxiety

The three most common anxiety disorders include Generalized Anxiety disorder, Panic Disorder, and phobia related disorders.

Those with Generalized Panic Disorder display

generalized anxiety for most days lasting at least 6 months. The source of their anxiety can be anything from problems at work to different social interactions. This disorder can cause significant problems in every aspect of their life.

Those suffering with panic disorders will experience recurrent unexpected panic attacks. A panic attack is defined as a period of intense fear that elevates quickly. These panic attacks can be brought on by fear or a specific situation.

Those with phobia-related disorders show intense fear or aversion to specific objects or situations. Those suffering from this type of disorder may take active steps in avoiding the objects that they are fearful of. Common things those with phobia-related disorders may be fearful of include flying, heights, blood, and social interaction.

### Causes of Anxiety

The exact cause of anxiety is still unknown. However, there may be some known factors linked to the disorder. Life experiences seem to be the main trigger. There are also some underlying health issues that may cause anxiety. Health conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and other mental disorders have been shown to be comorbidities in those with a diagnosed anxiety disorder. Certain prescription medications may also cause anxiety. A person's personality may increase their likelihood of developing an anxiety disorder. Sustaining a high stress level for long durations will also increase your chances of developing anxiety. Family genetics and a person's brain chemistry can also play a role.

### Signs of Anxiety

Due to there being several different types of anxiety,

there are different symptoms that can be present with an anxiety disorder. Some of the most common symptoms of anxiety include:

- Feeling nervous or restless
- Sense of impending danger
- Increased heart rate
- Sweating
- Trembling
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having difficulty controlling worry
- Trouble concentrating or thinking about anything other than the constant worry

It is important to talk to your doctor if you have been experiencing any of these symptoms.

### **Anxiety Treatments**

Anxiety disorders are treatable but unfortunately only 36.9% of those suffering with these disorders will receive treatment. Treatments will vary based on the type of anxiety disorder. Even those diagnosed with the same type of anxiety disorder may have differing treatments. When trying these different treatment options it is important to remember to stay patient as some results may take a few weeks to be realized. Often medications

like SSRIs and SNRIs can be prescribed and therapy is a common option for these patients. Diet and nutritional changes, like reducing caffeine intake or drinking plenty of water, are shown to help. In those suffering from anxiety, exercise can be a great option. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends that every adult perform a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise each week. Getting the recommended amount of sleep each night may be another way to ease anxiety symptoms.

***“Stress, anxiety and depression are caused when we are living to please others” - Paulo Coelho***

***“Exercise keeps me occupied which is good for my mental health.” - Gail Porter***

***“Self-esteem is as important to our well-being as legs are to a table. It is essential for physical and mental health and for happiness.” - Louise Hart***

### **References**

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### **Other News**

\*\*If you have any suggestions for newsletter topics, please contact Dean Susan Hanrahan at hanrahan@astate.edu.

The Arkansas State University Employee Wellness Newsletter is published monthly during the academic year by the College of Nursing and Health Professions. Health questions can be addressed to Dean Susan Hanrahan, Ph.D., ext. 3112 or hanrahan@astate.edu. Produced by Kayla Leal, graduate student in the College of Nursing and Health Professions, Physical Therapy Program.