

Generalized Anxiety

Most people worry some of the time, however, if you have Generalized Anxiety Disorder, worries and fears are so constant that they interfere with your capacity to work, play, and relax. You may worry about the same things that other people worry about: money, job, family problems. But, unlike others, your worry is unrelenting. At times, you may feel tense and anxious and won't even know what you are worried about.

Symptoms of Generalized Anxiety include:

- Worry that disrupts your job, activities, or social life
- Uncontrollable worry
- Muscle tension, aches, soreness
- Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- Stomach problems, nausea, and/or diarrhea
- Jumpiness or feeling unsteady
- Edginess or restlessness
- Easily tired
- Irritability
- Feelings of dread
- Inability to relax
- Problems with focus and concentration – your mind may be “going blank”
- Particular fears

If you are dealing with anxiety there are some anxiety-reducing lifestyle changes you can try. These include eliminating caffeine and sugar, exercising, improving your diet, and receiving help and support from family and friends. It is also helpful to practice meditation and deep breathing exercises. Relaxing activities (walking, listening to music, petting your dog or cat, taking a warm bath, sitting outside in good weather, going for a drive) may also prove helpful.

Generalized anxiety is often accompanied by depression, substance abuse, weight gain or loss, and physical problems.

Psychotherapy is a key component of treatment for Generalized Anxiety. Medications may be helpful but psychotherapy has been shown to be as effective as medication and free of adverse reactions. Changing unhealthy thinking patterns may take time and effort, but will be well worth the improvement in overall well-being.