

Your Health Reference Sheet

Topic: Anxiety and Panic Disorders

By Carol Ritberger, PhD, Medical Intuitive

Anxiety and panic disorders are far more common problems than was once thought. In fact, over 30 million Americans have been diagnosed with clinical anxiety, panic disorders, and phobias within the last five years. However, because the symptoms associated with acute anxiety and panic disorders mimic the symptoms of more serious illnesses, up to 70 percent of people who have had an anxiety or panic attack were found to have seen ten or more different doctors before being correctly diagnosed. According to Mayo Clinic researchers, between 10 and 20 percent of Americans will have acute anxiety and a panic attack at some point in their lives; and a Harvard study showed that people who react to stress this way are four times more likely to become physically ill than those who don't.

Research also has revealed that these disorders don't age discriminate. They affect people in their teenage years, through middle age, and even later in life when many of the obvious, everyday known stress triggers are minimized or eliminated. What's also been discovered is that anxiety and panic disorders, once believed to affect women twice as much as men, are no longer just a female issue as more and more men are being diagnosed annually. Evidence is showing that the increase in these kinds of disorders is tied to the pressures associated with economic instability and uncertainty, fear of the unknown, and lack of feeling in control.

Anxiety and panic disorders are like the chicken and the egg question—which came first? Was it the chemical imbalances in the brain that caused the body to overreact physically, or was it the psychological stressors that triggered the chemical imbalances in the brain? Whichever it is, the reality is that anxiety and panic disorders need to be treated both physically and psychologically if the triggers behind them are to be eliminated and if the person is to regain the quality of health and life they desire.

If you ask someone who suffers from anxiety and who experiences panic attacks how the physical symptoms affect them, they'll tell you that they're worrisome and frightening, and they dramatically alter their behavior and profoundly impact their quality of life. They may also describe what they're feeling as being caught in an avalanche, meaning once the physical symptoms get started, they're hard to stop and even harder to gain control over.

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The information expresses a holistic and energetic perspective of illness and isn't intended to replace professional medical advice and care. Please consult a medical professional or a qualified practitioner if you have any health concerns.