



PATHWAY CLINIC

comprehensive treatment for mental health

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

All of us have felt anxiety in our lives. It has crept up on us as we prepared for speeches, job interviews or sporting events.

In all of these cases, anxiety has a beneficial effect. It prompts us to be prepared. Anxiety motivates us to practice for presentations. It causes our hearts to quicken and breathing to increase. It sharpens our senses so that we are able to more quickly respond to what we see, hear and feel.

For most of us, these responses develop only when needed. However, many people live with feelings of anxiety and apprehension nearly all the time. They suffer from generalized anxiety disorder, an illness in which people face constant, unrealistic and excessive fears or worries.

What are the Symptoms?

In addition to struggling with the emotional distress of fears, many physical symptoms also accompany the disorder. Generalized anxiety disorder is characterized by three major groups of symptoms.

- Trembling, twitching or feeling shaky; muscle tension, aches or soreness; restlessness and tiring easily.
- Shortness of breath or smothering sensations; accelerated heart rate; sweating or cold, clammy hands; dry mouth; dizziness; nausea; diarrhea or other abdominal distress; hot flashes or chills; frequent urination; and trouble swallowing or always feeling a lump in the throat.
- Feeling keyed up or on edge; having an exaggerated startle response; having problems concentrating; having trouble falling or staying asleep; and irritability.

Treatment Can Help

Although research has not identified the specific biochemical interaction or series of events that can cause generalized anxiety disorder, it has provided treatments that can diminish feelings of continual apprehension and alleviate the physical distress associated with this illness.

Currently, treatment plans call for individual therapy that has proved beneficial for many people suffering from generalized anxiety disorder.

Throughout therapy, mental health professionals help patients understand their illness and its effects on family, social and work relationships. The goal is to help the patient cope with the illness in ways that prevent it from controlling his or her life.

What Can You Do

No one should have to suffer from the relentless distress of generalized anxiety disorder alone or in silence. If you suspect that you or someone you know, suffers from this potentially crippling illness, treatment is available. If you would like more information or would like to make an appointment, Pathway Clinic can help. Please call 608-643-3663 or visit www.PathwayClinic.com.