

## What is generalized anxiety disorder?

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It is normal to feel worried or anxious, especially during stressful times. However, when the worry or anxiety is happening often and cannot be controlled, it can interfere with day-to-day activities. For a diagnosis of GAD, the uncontrolled worry and anxiety symptoms must have occurred for more than six months.

Symptoms of GAD:

- Persistent worry or problems controlling worry about different things
- Feeling nervous, irritable or on edge
- A sense of doom or panic
- Increased heart rate
- Hyperventilation, or breathing quickly
- Sweating or trembling
- Feeling tired or weak
- Problems sleeping
- Trouble concentrating
- Gastrointestinal problems

Don't worry! Here are some things you can do to manage your worry and improve your symptoms.

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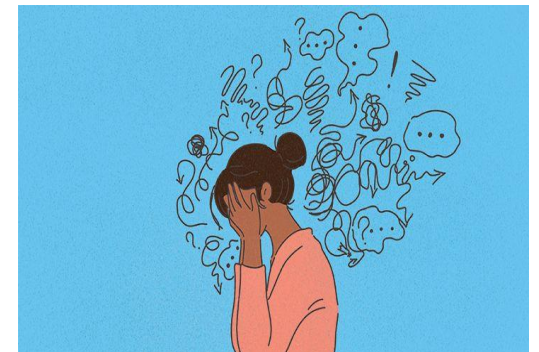
You can contact me about questions and concerns by text or email.

# Generalized Anxiety Disorder

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## Help Strategies



### Healthy Diet

It is important to maintain a well-balanced diet. Increase your intake of fruits and vegetables, especially fruits that are high in Vitamin C. Increase your intake of whole grain food.



### Exercise

Research has shown that 30 minutes of exercise at least three times a week can decrease anxiety symptoms and improve your overall health. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a habit. Common activities include walking, running, swimming, weightlifting, yoga, playing a sport, hiking, or biking.



### Limit Alcohol and Caffeine

You should limit your alcohol and caffeine intake. Caffeine increases your heart rate and can increase anxiety symptoms. Decrease alcohol intake, as alcohol can worsen anxiety.



### Stop Smoking

If you are smoking cigarettes or vaping, you should stop. It will benefit your overall health and decrease anxiety. The addictive chemical in tobacco products is nicotine. Nicotine is a stimulant and can make anxiety worse.



### Sleep

Make a goal to get 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Improving your sleep habits will help with anxiety symptoms and improve your overall health. Go to sleep at the same time every night and try to wake up at the same time every morning. Sleep in a quiet, dark space. Limit screen time before going to bed.

#### Risk factors for GAD:

Female  
Low educational level  
Low household income  
Unemployment or disabled status  
Family history of psychiatric disorder(s)  
Substance dependence  
Environmental stressors  
Childhood adversity

### Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Research shows that cognitive behavioral therapy, or CBT, is one of the best ways to help with patients with anxiety. You can do this with the MyCompass application that can be done through a smartphone, tablet, or computer that has internet access. This website will help you learn new ways of coping with your anxiety. You will need to create a username and password to begin.

You can find the CBT application at

[www.mycompass.org.au](http://www.mycompass.org.au)

1. Click "Get Started" to begin.
2. Register an account with your email and password.
3. Take the self-assessment test. You can choose the depression screener, anxiety screener or both.

You can track your anxiety symptoms, including what you were doing and who you were with.

This program will teach you about anxiety, provides you with interactive activities to cope with anxiety symptoms, and will help you set goals.

### Medication

Your doctor may prescribe an antidepressant medication to treat anxiety symptoms. Select serotonin reuptake inhibitors are the first line medication options for GAD. It is important to take this medication as prescribed and at the same time every day. It can take up to 6 weeks for the medication to take effect. Talk to your doctor if you have side effects or want to stop the medication. Do not abruptly stop these medications.