

Types of Anxiety

The word "anxiety" is sometimes used to describe the temporary nervousness or fear we experience before and during challenging life experiences, such as a job interview or medical test.

Phobias

It is also used to describe more persistent types of anxiety, such as phobias (fear of specific things or situations, such as snakes, heights, animals, insects, flying in airplanes, elevators, etc.). May include common thoughts and images about specific feared situations.

Social anxiety

The fear of appearing foolish and/or being criticized or rejected in social situations: "People will judge me"; "I'll look foolish"; images of blushing, others making fun of me, etc.

Panic disorder

Intense feelings of anxiety in which people often feel as if they are about to die or go crazy: "I'm dying now" (e.g., heart attack, stroke); "I'm losing my mind"; images of paramedics, losing consciousness, etc.

PTSD

Post-traumatic stress disorder (repeated memories of terrible traumas with high levels of distress). Flashback images of traumatic events: "I've been damaged forever"; "I'm in danger right now"; thoughts and images triggered by sensory experiences (sounds, smells, sights, and sensations similar to traumatic events).

Health worries

Persistent worries about having an illness or physical problem, despite being found healthy in medical tests. "I have an illness that has not been diagnosed"; "Physical changes or pain are always signs of serious illness"; "When doctors or tests say I'm healthy, they missed something"; "It is important to check or scan often for signs of illness or physical changes."

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Characterized by frequent worries and physical symptoms of anxiety: "What if ...?" worries about many different things; "If something bad happens, I can't cope"; images of feeling overwhelmed etc.