

# What is Anxiety?

General Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is a medical condition that impacts more than 6.8 million adults in the United States. It is characterized by persistent and overwhelming worries about a wide range of issues. These concerns can encompass home life, work, and relationships, often overwhelming the individual and hindering their ability to handle daily responsibilities.

GAD is diagnosed by a licensed professional when a person experiences difficulty controlling their worries for more days than not over a period of at least six months, and accompanied by three or more symptoms.



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If you or someone you know is struggling or having thoughts of suicide, call or text the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat online with someone at [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org). In life-threatening situations, call 911.



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# Managing Anxiety

Learn how to identify, cope with, and reduce anxiety in this easy-to-follow guide.



# Symptoms of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

Below are some common symptoms that individuals may experience when dealing with anxiety. It's important to remember that anxiety can manifest in various ways and to different degrees for each person. If you find yourself struggling with any of the following symptoms, it's essential to consult a licensed professional.

## Physical Symptoms

- Nausea
- Increased Heart Rate
- Sleep disturbances
- Trembling
- Muscle tension
- Excessive Sweating (palms/armpits)

## Mental & Emotional Symptoms

- Constant and excessive worrying
- Irritability and restlessness
- Trouble concentrating
- Feeling detached from reality
- Avoiding behavior such as isolation from friends and family

## What causes GAD?

Although GAD can appear to run in families, its precise cause remains unclear. Numerous researchers and medical experts believe that GAD arises from a combination of genetics, brain chemistry, biological factors, and environmental influences. While there may not be a single identifiable cause, there are still various options available for healing and symptom management.





## Is it normal stress or an anxiety disorder?


This is indeed a valid and relatable question. Life can become overwhelming, and stress can accumulate. Nearly everyone encounters stress; however, an anxiety disorder differs in that it involves a persistent bodily response that may arise even in the absence of a real “threat.” While experiencing occasional stress and anxiety is normal, anxiety disorders become evident when they interfere with daily life activities.

## Anxiety Management Techniques

Remember that you are not alone! While anxiety can be quite overwhelming, these techniques may assist in lessening the intensity of your symptoms.

 Breathing techniques, such as inhaling for 5 seconds, holding for 5 seconds, and exhaling for another 5 seconds. This practice can reset mind and body.

 Engaging in physical activity, whether it's taking a stroll around your neighborhood or sprinting at full speed, releases healthy endorphins and dopamine into your system!

 Utilizing grounding techniques—such as identifying five things you can see, taste, hear, smell, and touch—can be an effective way to help your mind refocus. There is a wide range of grounding methods available; all you need to do is discover the one that works best for you!



Be gentle with yourself! Indulge in a delightful activity, pick up a new book, or enjoy a sweet treat at a nearby café. Practicing self-kindness can be just what you need to recharge and refresh.

