

Fact Sheet

Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illnesses in the United States, affecting over 40 million adults every year. Anxiety is treatable; however, some racial and ethnic minority groups face additional challenges getting the care they need.

Office of Minority Health and Health Equity

What is anxiety?

Occasional anxiousness is a normal part of life. However, with anxiety disorders, everyday situations can trigger feelings of worry or fear that are intense, persistent, or uncontrollable. Anxiety disorders can interfere with work, school, family, relationships, social life, and overall well-being.

Having an anxiety disorder is a risk factor for depression, and both disorders can occur together. Living with an untreated mental health disorder can have serious consequences.

What are the symptoms of anxiety disorders?

Symptoms of anxiety disorders vary from person to person. Common symptoms include:

- Worrying excessively about everyday things
- Trouble controlling worries or feelings of nervousness
- Feeling restless, wound-up, irritable, or on-edge
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Headaches, muscle aches, stomachaches, or unexplained pains



Who is affected by anxiety disorders?

Anxiety disorders can affect people of all ages, races, ethnicities, and genders. Certain people may be at higher risk of developing an anxiety disorder such as people with a family history of anxiety or other mental disorders, or people who have been exposed to stressful and negative life or environmental events.

How are anxiety disorders diagnosed?

A health care provider will ask questions about your feelings, mood, behavior patterns, and other aspects of your life. This screening may include a physical exam and blood test to rule out physical causes.

How to Get Help Now

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 to access the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. You can also access the Lifeline via web chat at 988lifeline.org. The Lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States and U.S. territories.

How are anxiety disorders treated?

Anxiety disorders are treatable. Treatments can include psychotherapy, or “talk therapy,” stress management techniques, FDA-approved medications, such as anti-anxiety or antidepressants, or a combination of these treatments. Talk to a health care provider to determine the best treatment for you.

Anxiety disorders and clinical trials

The FDA encourages people from diverse backgrounds to participate in clinical trials. If you think an anxiety disorder clinical trial may be right for you, talk to your health care provider. You can also search for clinical trials in your area at www.ClinicalTrials.gov.

For more information on health equity, visit: www.fda.gov/HealthEquity