

Panic Attacks and Anxiety



**by
Adrian Gunter**

About the author...

Adrian Gunter

Adrian got started in the self help area in 2009 and focuses on helping people achieve their goals and ambitions by teaching them how to turn negative thoughts into positive actions. He runs a blog at <http://adriangunter.com> where you can find news, tips, tricks and positive thinking techniques for enabling you to live the life you deserve.

He is also author of the ebook "Positive Steps to Personal Development" which is available free from <http://adriangunter.com>

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Anxiety—What Is It?

Your heart is pounding fast and you are feeling dizzy. It seems as though you have to sit down in order for you not to fall. You are having trouble catching your breath.

You are experiencing a numbing feeling in your hands and feet. There is a tightening pressure in your chest area. You think you may be on the verge of a heart attack. You think something is really wrong with you; however, you are far from dying.

Anxiety is a mental disorder in which a person fears just about anything, and they think every outcome will turn out for the worst. This fear is frightening because it is so intense and overwhelming.

If you have any type of disorder that is associated with anxiety, then your mind will always be focused on being scared for no reason. You will always feel that there is no solution to your unfounded fear and that there is no way out.

You feel paralyzed as though you can't do anything. Basically, you are frozen with fear. This disorder can attack at any time.

Anxiety disorder is more than just one action. Anxiety disorder has different sub-disorders that can fit under this. For instance, there are panic attacks, obsessive compulsive disorder and others that are related to the anxiety disorder family.

There are many people in all walks of life that suffer from anxiety attacks. If you are not afflicted with them, you may know someone who is. If it is you, you need to know how to help yourself. If it's someone else, you need to know how to help them.

You will have to be understanding and help them to get the treatment and support that they need to combat this condition.

Panic Disorder And Panic Attacks

Panic disorder is considered to be an illness. Symptoms include feeling suddenly terrorized, feeling faint, pain in the chest or feeling smothered. Panic attacks fall under the panic disorder condition and are prone to some of these same symptoms, plus others. When someone is having a panic attack, there are thoughts that are unrealistic or they fear that they are no longer in control or a situation.

With panic disorder, a person can also experience depression, or substance abuse. If these conditions are attached to their panic disorder, they should not be treated together. Sometimes they will feel sad or won't want to eat. They may not be able to sleep or only sleep for a few hours. They don't have much energy to do anything and they cannot maintain focus.

Panic Attack

A panic attack is when a person has a fear or apprehension that is sudden or intense. There is usually nothing wrong and no one is in danger. Panic attacks can happen suddenly, last for a few minutes, and then it's over. There are others that last longer than a few minutes or there may be more than one and they follow behind one another.

There are three types of panic attacks:

- **Spontaneous** –these panic attacks occur with no warning. There is nothing that could possibly bring it on. Even if a person is sleeping, they can still experience a panic attack.
- **Situationally bound** – these panic attacks happen when there is a situation to which a person has been or will be exposed to. They are consider to trigger or provoke the panic attack. For instance, if a person hears a car backfire, it could remind them of when they were in the military and fighting a war with ammunition.
- **Situationally predisposed** – these panic attacks can happen when there is a delayed reaction. The attack doesn't always occur right away. There are some instances where people may immediately have an attack, and other instances it is delayed or it may not happen at all.

Panic attacks are defined as having at least four or more symptoms:

- A choking feeling
- Lightheaded or dizzy
- Shaking
- Trembling

- Shortness of breath
- Accelerated heartbeat

- Pain in chest

- Numbness

- Chills

- Feeling of going crazy

- Nauseated

- Sweating

- Feelings of detachment

If a person experiences less than four symptoms, they can still be classified as having a panic attack, but it would be called a "limited symptom" panic attack. A person can have a panic attack at any time. It can even happen when they are sleeping. It has affected millions of adults in the United States.

However, there are more women that experience panic attacks. In fact, women experience panic attacks twice as much as men do. Panic attacks can start in the late teen or early adult years.

There are people that have frequent panic attacks and allow themselves to become almost helpless. There are some places where they will have stay away from because it can trigger another attack.

Or a person may not be able to participate in some activities, like going shopping and related outings. Most of the time, they are confined to where they live and won't go out unless someone else is with them.

This condition is called agoraphobia, which is when a person is fearful of open spaces or being out and about by themselves. If they seek help early for this, the progressive treatment can be successful.

It is a very treatable anxiety disorder and will respond to most medications or therapies that are provided to them. Medication and/or therapy can help the affected person to alter the way that they think in order to rid themselves of fear and anxiety.

If you have frequent panic attacks, you may have a panic disorder. Panic attacks become a panic disorder when the condition becomes chronic. Your life can be in serious danger, along with others.

Getting Help

If you think you may be experiencing symptoms of an anxiety disorder, attack or related condition, please consult with your physician. He or she will be able to advise you if your symptoms match the clinical diagnosis of any of these mental health conditions.

If it is the case, you will need to consult with a professional that specializes in mental health conditions. These professionals are trained in therapy that deals with various behavioural patterns and will suggest medication if it is warranted.

Find one that you will be comfortable about discussing your condition with. You don't want to feel intimidated by their presence. You want to be relaxed and to be able to discuss what is going on with you. The mental health professional will work with you to devise a plan that will help you get over your struggles with these kinds of disorders and attacks.

If you are prescribed medication, you must take it as directed and don't stop unless you are advised by your physician. You and the mental health professional or your physician should discuss how the medication will work. If you have side effects, please consult them as soon as possible. They may have to alter your dosage.

In regard to costs for medication and treatment, most insurance plans will cover that. However, don't assume and check with your insurance company first. If you lack insurance check with your local or country government agency to seek mental health care at one of their facilities.

The governmental agencies usually stick to a sliding scale depending how much that you can pay. Or if you have public assistance, Medicaid may kick in to pay for these services.

Medication And Treatment

For the most part, medication is used for anxiety attacks, disorders and related conditions. The choices can depend on what the condition is and what the person wants. A physician must conduct a thorough evaluation to determine if they are indeed suffering from one of these mental health conditions.

If so, it must also be established as to what type of disorder they are dealing with. If there is a combination of things, they must also be identified so that the physician will know how to treat it.

If they have already received treatment from an existing or a past anxiety disorder condition, the physician needs to know that. They also need to know if medication was given and the dosage. Or if they had other treatment, that needs to be disclosed as well.

If there were any side effects, that should be included, along with any therapy that was provided and if it was beneficial for them. There are some people that feel that the treatment they received did not work for them. Sometimes, it could be they may not have had enough time for the process to change or it was not done correctly.

Some people may have to go through different medications or treatments to find what will work for them. Medication is not the cure all for anxiety disorders, attacks and related conditions.

However, medication can control these conditions while the person is receiving therapy. Medication can only be used if a physician prescribes it. They are usually prescribed by psychiatrists that offer therapy of work with colleagues that provide some of the same services.

For the most part, the medications that are used for anxiety disorders are:

- Antidepressants
- Anti-anxiety drugs
- Beta-blockers

Using any of these medications can help the person to live a normal life.

Antidepressants

Originally, antidepressants were used for treatment of depression. However, they also work for those that are suffering from anxiety disorders. They work to change the chemistry in the brain. Once the initial dose is taken, it takes at least 4 to 6 weeks before the symptoms will go away. The medication must be taken as directed in order for this to work.

- **SSRIs** – Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors – these antidepressants work to change the level of the communication of the brain cells. Some of the more common ones are Prozac, Zoloft and Lexapro.

They are used to treat any panic disorder that is mixed with social phobia, depression or OCD. Since these are newer, they don't have as many side effects. However, those that use them may experience being jittery or nauseated in the initial stages of taking them. This is only temporary.

- **Tricyclics** – These antidepressants are older than SSRIs and are used for anxiety disorders other than OCD. They are administered with a low dosage and increase gradually.

Side effects include being dizzy, dry mouth, drowsy and weight gain. This can be eliminated by adjusting the dosage or using another medication of the same kind of antidepressant. Tofranil is used for GAD and panic disorder; Anafranil is used for OCD.

- **MAOIs** – Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors – these are the oldest of the antidepressants available to use for these conditions. It is mostly used for anxiety disorders, attacks and related conditions.

Some of the more common ones are Nardil, Marplan and Parnate. When taking MAOIs, there are certain foods and drinks that you have to stay away from. That would include cheese and red wine.

In addition to that, you cannot take Advil, Motrin, Tylenol or any other pain, cold or allergy reliever medication. Plus, women will not be able to use certain types of birth control pills. Herbal supplements are also off limits. Mixing MAOIs with any of these can cause an adverse reaction.

- **Anti-Anxiety Drugs** – Drugs such as benzodiazepines are highly potent. They work to fight off anxiety and have very few side effects. Being drowsy is the only one that is noticeable. This drug is only prescribed for a brief period of time. Physicians are weary about providing them to past drug abusers.

Because people can get easily addicted to them, they look for additional doses so they can keep going. However, if the person has panic disorder, they can use these drugs up to a year.

For social phobia, Klonopin is used and Ativan is used for panic disorder. One of the most common antidepressants on the market is Xanax, which is used for GAD and panic disorder.

If a person stops taking benzodiazepines all of a sudden, they can experience withdrawals; the anxiety attacks can come back to haunt them. This is one reason why some physicians are leery about using this drug or use them sporadically. Another anti-anxiety medication is Buspirone and it is used for GAD. There are some side effects that include nausea, headaches or dizziness. This is taken different than benzodiazepines. Buspirone has to be taken every day for at least two week before a person will feel the anti-anxiety effect from the drug.

- **Beta-Blockers** – Beta-blockers are used for treatment of heart conditions. They can also be used to keep away physical symptoms that determine anxiety disorders. Beta-blockers are used in situations such as if a person is giving a speech in front of other people, a bet-blocker can be used to keep those symptoms at bay.

If you are taking medication for an anxiety disorder, you should do the following:

- Have your physician to advise you on what medication would be effective for your condition.
- Have the physician consult you on how the drug works and what are the side effects from taking the drug.
- Inform your physician of other medications you may be taking. They may interfere with the dosage of the drug anxiety disorders.

The physician should advise you on the dosage and how you are directed to take it. They also need to advise you on how you should stop taking it when the time comes. With medication, some of them can actually trigger systems that can cause panic attacks. Physicians should always start out with a lower dose and then work their way up.

Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy deals with interacting with a mental health professional, such as a psychologist, psychiatrist or someone who is trained in counselling of mental health issues and conditions. They can help to find out what triggers anxiety disorders and panic disorders. They also work to see what is the best path to take in order to combat the symptoms.

Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy

Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy, or CBT, is very effective in the treatment of anxiety disorders. Thinking patterns are changed with the cognitive portion. The way people react to anxiety related issues is the behavioural portion.

People that have panic disorder can use cognitive-behavioural therapy to distinguish between heart attacks and panic attacks. CBT can also be used to help them overcome social phobia. It can help them to realize that everyone is not watching your every move, nor is everyone judging them.

There are techniques that they can learn to use for positive exposure. These techniques will also help them not to be so sensitive about anxiety triggers and symptoms.

Therapy for those who suffer from is to get them to have contact with germs or dirt on their hands. They should wait around a while before they wash them. The therapist will help them deal with the anxiety that follows before they wash their hands. The more they do it, the more the anxiety goes away.

If a person suffers from social phobia, their therapy would be to spend time with others in social situations. They should resist trying to leave when they start to feel uncomfortable. They won't feel ashamed or feel that people are judging them.

If someone has PTSD, their therapy could be drumming up that event that caused them a lot of trauma and pain in their life. This can help to diminish the fear that they are feeling inside.

With cognitive-behavioural therapy, the therapists will provide ways of how you can implement deep breathing exercises and other exercises to get rid of anxiety. Exercises can help you to relax in tense and stressful situations. Phobias have been treated with behavioural therapy that forces a person to expose themselves in a way that brings out their true fears and apprehensions. They face up to whatever it was that they feared.

One program that I have used myself very successfully to address and treat my own panic attack and anxiety issues is a product called Panic Away.

It uses a system of reprogramming your mind's responses to panic and anxiety without the need for drugs or medication and has a 97% success rate.

You can check out this great program at <http://adriangunter.com/Panicaway>

Alternative Treatments

Other than taking medication and therapy, there are alternative treatments that can be used in order to combat these conditions in the anxiety and panic attack family.

One of the main keys to getting over anxiety and panic attacks is to relax. That's not as easy to do as some may think. Start out by focusing and making sure that you are breathing slowly and steadily.

When a person is having a panic attack, one of the first things that happens is they have trouble breathing. Sometimes they have to pant in order to catch their breath. The purpose here is to make your breaths even so that they will slow down your heart rate

This will help the panic attack to eventually go away. A person is able to calm themselves by breathing slowly. They must continue to release air from their lungs. This helps to have deep breaths and make them feel calmer.

Lying down with your backside near a wall, bend the knees with the feet against the wall. Use one foot at a time and press into the wall. As you press it in, breathe in. As you release it from the wall, breathe out. Change up your feet when you are doing this. Take about 15 minutes until the feeling of panic has lifted from you.

Try not to think about the past. A lot of times, panic attacks happen from something that has to do with your past that you were upset about. Look at different shapes and colors.

If you like pets, get a small dog or cat.

If you are into fragrances, you can use aromatherapy to relieve yourself of anxiety and panic attacks. One aroma that has a calming effect is lavender. There are many places where you can purchase essential oils.

When you feel an anxiety or panic attack coming on, sniff the oil and it will work to calm you down. You can also use it as a massage oil, along with olive or grape seed

oil. There are other aromatherapy oils you can use. You have to smell them to see which one you prefer.

Panic Attacks That Are Left Untreated

Panic attacks can continue for a long time, sometimes for years to come. This longevity can be complicated by having consistent attacks. Symptoms include having certain phobias (fears) or leaving outside the home, not wanting to be around other people, feeling suicidal, financial issues and substance abuse. As a result, the person could end up suffering from heart disease.

If the panic attacks are not treated, the anxiety can increase and get worse. Their daily routine may be affected by attacks that are not going away. This must be dealt with head on; otherwise, the person cannot be a productive citizen of society.

How To Prevent Panic Attacks

There are ways that you can decrease the chance of an onset of a panic attack. You can learn how to deal with them better. You must recognize the symptoms. When the initial ones begin, they may be others that come along. Just remember to take slow and deep breaths.

Keep decreasing your anxiety level through things such as exercise and meditation. Don't be in a rush and take your time with this. Doing it quickly can defeat the purpose. Therapy is a time-consuming process and improvement will be gradual.

Don't be hard on yourself. Take it easy. Don't beat yourself over the head criticizing yourself because of your condition. Make sure that you avoid things such as cigarettes, teas that have caffeine, and carbonated drinks. That may be difficult, but at least start weaning your way off slowly.

Work on not thinking about things that may have been traumatic for you in the past. These traumatic events can shape how you will react to things in the future. You cannot allow the past to hinder you if you are looking to move forward.

Make sure to keep a loving and understanding support system around you so that you will be able to move forward every day. Whether it's family members or a friend, they need to be genuinely interested in help you get better and relieve those fears that you have pent up inside.

How To Lend Your Support

If you are helping someone who has one of these conditions, it is very important that you are there for the long haul. It may take longer than a few weeks or months for that person to totally overcome this.

You should not be judgmental or condescending in any way to the person who is suffering. This is a serious matter and you should treat it as such. The worst thing you could do regarding anxiety and panic attacks is to be dismissive and think that they can quickly get over it. You cannot be the saviour for them and solve their problem.

People who suffer these kinds of attacks are not thinking about anything except how scared they are that something bad is going to happen. The situation cannot be solved by shaking them and making them come out of it, or waving a magic wand over them and saying "abracadabra".

Don't underestimate their actions by thinking that they are pretending to be acting. This is serious and their actions should not be underestimated. The best thing you can do is to do everything in your power that you can to be there as that support system.

They could feel at any moment that they were in grave danger. They feel as though they could not pull themselves out of whatever trouble they perceived. This is when the accelerated heartbeat, shortness of breath and other symptoms come in to play.

If you ignore them, you are doing more to hurt them than to help. They depend on your support and if you decide to bail out on their weakest moment, they will feel more worthless.

This could make them start feeling depressed and not want to do much of anything for their situation. If they know that you are with them to help them stick it out, then they will feel better about themselves.

You must allow them to go through the attack. If you try to intervene, you could make the situation worse. Let it happen and they will eventually come out of it. However, if for some reason they don't stop, call a paramedic to assist.

One thing that you don't want to do is to give them medication, especially if it's not prescribed by their physician. That will definitely cause them harm. So make sure that you are not doing anything to jeopardize their well being.

Conclusion

Well, you have made it to the end of this ebook and hopefully you are coming away with more helpful information than when you began reading. Also, I hope that you were able to make it this far so I can leave you with a few more words of encouragement.

If you suffer from Panic Attacks or Anxiety, I commend you for making a choice to learn more about what it is, what you can expect, some steps you can take to get your condition under control, and last but not least, finding someone that can understand what you are going through and know that you are not alone in your fight. You can get help and you should under no circumstances feel stupid, embarrassed, or any other judgmental thing about yourself for doing so. You are a person with feelings that happens to suffer from a serious disorder that deserves the right to be happy and comfortable with your life!

If you are on the other side of the token, and you are living with, care about someone with, or know someone who suffers Panic Attacks, I truly hope that you have a clearer understanding of what that person faces on a daily basis and how you can help them get through the tough times.

Whether you are someone battling with Panic Attacks or Anxiety, or someone who loves a person fighting this battle, I wish you all the best life can give to you. You are a wonderful person for taking steps to educate yourself on this serious illness. Congratulate yourself for a job well done!

For more information on a proven program for ending panic attacks and anxiety permanently take a look at Panic-Away by clicking on the link below:

<http://adriangunter.com/Panicaway>