

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

Signs and Symptoms:

- Irritability
- Tense muscles
- Headaches
- Difficulty sleeping
- Rapid breathing; heart racing
- Nightmares
- Nausea; diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Excessive worry
- Difficulty concentrating
- Body aches and pains
- Trembling

Four million Americans suffer from many of these symptoms. Generalized Anxiety Disorder is characterized by 6 months or greater of exaggerated worry and tension that is unfounded or much more severe than the anxiety that most people experience.

Here are some things you should now about Generalized Anxiety Disorder:

- It is a real disease, not a personal weakness.
- Sheer willpower and personal strength are no more a cure for anxiety than they are for diabetes, high blood pressure or cancer.
- Anxiety occurs twice as often in women as it does in men.
- The cause of GAD is not clearly understood.
- Anxiety can be effectively treated with one or more of the following: medication, relaxation techniques and counseling.
- GAD often begins in childhood or adolescence, but it can begin in adulthood, too.
- Anxiety can be associated with stress, fatigue and overwork.
- It is common for anxiety to co-exist with other disorders such as depression, thyroid disease, and irritable bowel syndrome. It is important to have a good medical examination to exclude other possible causes of your symptoms.

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