



Improving the mental health of the community through awareness, advocacy, and support.

Mental Health America of Northeast Florida

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If you or someone you know is in crisis now, seek help immediately.
Call United Way crisis center **211**. Or dial **911** for immediate assistance.



Living with
ANXIETY 



We all have something
special to give.





Did you know anxiety disorders are among the most common mental illnesses, with more than 40 million American adults age 18 years and older affected each year. Anxiety disorders typically last at least six months and can get worse if they are not treated.

WHAT IS ANXIETY DISORDER?

Everyone gets anxious from time to time. Whether it's a stressful event like a public speaking engagement or a first date, it's common to feel uneasy and nervous before something important happens. Anxiety disorders, however, are illnesses that cause people to feel frightened, distressed, and uneasy for no apparent reason. There are many different kinds of anxiety disorders including panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), phobias, and generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). Left untreated, these disorders can dramatically reduce productivity and diminish an individual's quality of life.

WHO GETS ANXIETY DISORDER?

Anyone can have an anxiety disorder regardless of age, gender, or race. It is one of the most common mental illnesses, with more than 40 million American adults age 18 years and older affected each year. While research has shown a link between genetics and anxiety disorders, there are many other factors that lead to the condition, including lifestyle and environment. It's also typical for anxiety disorders to occur along with other mental or physical illnesses such as alcohol and drug abuse, which can mask anxiety symptoms or make them worse.

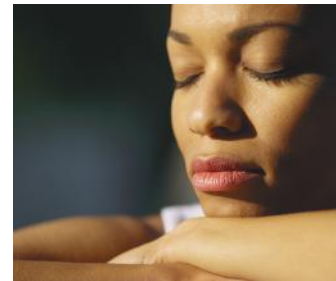
SYMPTOMS

Because there are many different types of anxiety disorders, symptoms vary. The following are common signs to look out for:

- Avoiding social situations for fear of being judged or humiliated
- Persistent and excessive worry
- Having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- Irrational and disruptive fears
- Chronic indigestion such as stomachaches, cramping, and constipation
- Incessant self-consciousness
- Onset of debilitating panic attacks
- Reliving disturbing or traumatic events
- Obsessive and intrusive thoughts
- Self-doubt and second-guessing decisions
- Loss of pleasure in daily activities
- Alcohol and drug abuse

TREATMENT

The good news is that treatments for anxiety disorders are highly effective. They often combine medication with specific types of psychotherapy, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, which teaches patients to understand their thinking patterns so that they may learn to react differently in situations that cause them anxiety.



HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

MHA offers online screenings to help identify symptoms, and to find the help you need to feel your best and healthiest. To learn more about our screenings, visit the MHA website at www.mhajax.org. Our screenings are confidential, online, and will take just a few minutes of your time.