

# ANXIETY DISORDERS: NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF?

## WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Anxiety is a normal reaction to a stressor and helps to cope or deal with the situation
- ❖ People with anxiety feel fearful which is usually caused by some stressful event
- ❖ Anxiety is a normal human emotion that everyone has; anxiety disorders are far more distressful, can interfere with the ability to lead a normal life, and can be incapacitating
- ❖ When anxiety becomes overwhelming it can lead to an anxiety disorder marked by excessive worry and fear, constant irrational thoughts, and exaggerated concerns
- ❖ Anxiety disorders affect almost 40 million American adults every year
- ❖ People with anxiety disorders often have heart palpitations, fatigue, nausea, muscle tension, stomach distress, difficulty breathing, sweating, headaches, weakness, difficulty concentrating, trembling, and difficulty falling or staying asleep
- ❖ Social anxiety or social phobia can be a fear of embarrassing oneself or being humiliated in social situations
- ❖ Panic, an anxiety disorder which usually peaks in 10 minutes and rarely lasts more than 30 minutes, is an episode of intense fear and happens suddenly and without warning; people think they are going to die, have a heart attack, or lose control
- ❖ Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that can occur after a life threatening or traumatic event and has symptoms of hypervigilance and flashbacks
- ❖ Phobias are intense fears of very specific objects or situations such as heights, flying, elevators, certain animals, clowns, etc.
- ❖ Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) includes exaggerated and excessive worry, chronic anxiety, and constant irrational thoughts that interfere with daily functioning
- ❖ Obsessive-compulsive disorder is an anxiety disorder characterized by repetitive and unwanted thoughts and/or behaviors that can't seem to be stopped voluntarily
- ❖ Test or performance anxiety is due to the fear of failing a test or a task and being negatively evaluated or embarrassed
- ❖ Anxiety can also be the symptom of a health issue such as COPD, heart arrhythmia, or prolapsed mitral valve
- ❖ Anti-anxiety and antidepressant medications will not cure anxiety disorders but will control them while the person is getting psychotherapy

## WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Dispute your irrational thoughts and face your fears rather than avoid them
- ❖ Change your diet by limiting your intake of caffeine, energy drinks, and chocolate
- ❖ Exercise regularly and eat a healthy breakfast with small meals throughout the day
- ❖ Engage in relaxation activities and practice yoga, meditation, deep breathing, mindfulness, and self-hypnosis
- ❖ Reduce alcohol and nicotine intake and insure that you get enough sleep
- ❖ Build your confidence by succeeding at tasks and challenges
- ❖ Seek professional help if you cannot reduce your anxiety on your own or you have had an upsetting or traumatic experience

## WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at [\*\*DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com\*\*](mailto:DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com)

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