

Anatomy of Anxiety

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Buried deep in the brain is an area known as the limbic system. The limbic system connects the key parts of the brain such as the amygdala and the hippocampus where all memories begin and are stored for later playback. The limbic system is the emotional storehouse of the brain where anxiety is born. When you are under stress, the limbic system acts like an alarm, sending messages of anxiety, fear and panic. As a storehouse of emotional memories, it also plays back painful traumas or stressful episodes of the past. If the stress is chronic, the unceasing signals can break down the master controller of the brain's reasoning and decision-making centers, resulting in anxiety, panic, insomnia, chronic fatigue and phobias.

One out of five children and adults suffer from anxiety in the United States alone. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, some twenty-four million Americans will suffer from an anxiety disorder at some time in their life. In children, constant anxiety can contribute to Attention Deficit Disorder and hyperactivity. Thousands of children are given this diagnosis and Ritalin is prescribed; yet the problem is anxiety related.

MAJOR SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

1. Pounding, skipping, racing heart
2. Unable to relax, constant tension, nervousness
3. Feeling of loss of control, uncertainty
4. Mental confusion, memory problems
5. Restless sleep, restlessness
6. Neck and shoulder pain, muscle spasms
7. Difficulty breathing, cannot take a deep breath
8. Rush of panic and fear, adrenaline rush
9. Mood swings
10. Bottomless stomach, diarrhea, constipation
11. Loss of sex drive
12. Crying
13. Facial tics
14. Knots in stomach
15. Digestive upsets
16. Obsessive sweating

There are medical disorders that may provoke anxiety symptoms. They include:

1. **Cardiovascular** – cardiac arrhythmias, congestive heart failure, high blood pressure, heart attack.
2. **Respiratory** – asthma, emphysema, hyperventilation, hypoxia
3. **Endocrine** – Cushing's syndrome, hypothyroidism
4. **Neurological** – Epilepsy, Huntington's disease, migraine headaches, multiple headaches, Wilson's disease, vertigo, chronic pain

Many times the drugs are given for the medical problems can cause rebound anxiety. Some of these are stimulants, sedatives, tranquilizers, MAO's (monoamine oxidase inhibitors), tricyclics and antidepressants. There are numerous anxiety symptoms; those related to panic are physical. Those with anxiety disorders often see a long list of physicians before finally realizing that the problem is anxiety. Fear of impending surgery or a health crisis can cause the limbic system to send constant messages of anxiety, fear and panic. When physicians and hospitals are involved, there is always uncertainty, which gives birth to anxiety. This anxiety represents a fear of loss of control and can cause hospital phobias.

Caring for a loved one after surgery, especially if cancer is involved, causes the caregiver to take on the symptoms and display anxiety and pain. A study sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health showed 30% of the caregivers suffer from clinical depression or anxiety while the loved one is alive. A quarter suffers symptoms four years later; 10% of non-care giving relatives were depressed and had anxiety attacks for four years after the death. Grief for a loved one can cause anxiety that produces a constant adrenalin rush, which in turn can cause muscle contraction headaches. Physical pain frequently comes from chronic anxiety. Millions of people in the U.S. suffer from stress and anxiety induced pain. Until the cause is addressed, they will never improve.

If you or your children suffer from anxiety, drugs are not the answer. Drugs do not create the needed neurotransmitters for the limbic system. An in-depth study done by Consumer Reports, January 1993 cited studies that demonstrated Xanax, Prozac, Halcion and others were not effective. Drugs only treat symptoms. Stop the drugs and the symptoms will return. Peter Breggin, M.D. in his book *Toxic Psychiatry*, addresses all the negative side effects of psychiatric drugs. If you are taking antidepressants or tranquilizers I encourage you to read this excellent book.

Those who have anxiety need neurotransmitters. Amino acids create neurotransmitters and restore the balance of brain chemistry. The specific amino acids for anxiety are used in combination include GABA, glycine and glutamine. **Anxiety Control** is a complete neurotransmitter formula that addresses the deficiencies in the brain. If you have depression **Mood Sync*** will be very helpful. It contains both 5HTP and tyrosine to balance the serotonin and dopamine levels. All amino acids must be taken daily and in specific amounts for the brain to be chemically balanced. If your problem is test anxiety use **Super Glutamine powder**, two scoops three

times daily. **L Theanine** is known as the relaxation amino acid. LT can put your brain into an alpha state and keep you calm and relaxed. If you have a nervous stomach open the capsule and mix with a little water and drink. LT can be taken three times daily if needed. **Mag Link**, a magnesium chloride, is very helpful with anxiety and chronic pain. Every anxious person I have seen is magnesium deficient. Magnesium is the number one stress mineral. Under prolonged situations of stress and anxiety, magnesium stores are burned rapidly. The optimal intake of magnesium is 600-1,000 milligrams per day. Most people only get 100 milligrams per day. The R.D.A. is 400 milligrams per day. This means that you are deficient in magnesium, and this deficiency can lead to increased anxiety, facial tics, palpitations, back pain, heart disease and hypertension. For chronic pain, use **DLPA**** 750 milligrams twice daily, **Boswella** 300 milligrams twice daily or **Pain Control** according to label instructions. For sleep, use **Sleep Link***, **HTP10*** or **5HTP***.

Note: * Do not use if you are taking an SSRI, tricyclic or MAOI antidepressant

** Do not use if you are taking MAOI, tricyclic antidepressants or if you have a history of skin melanoma or other cancers.

If you are on a proper supplement program you can control your anxiety by feeding your brain the nutrients it needs. Amino acids and brain function go hand in hand. The brain is the most undernourished organ in the body. Your brain needs nourishment daily. The proper nourishment comes from vitamins, amino acids, proteins and carbohydrates.

Learn to relax by using relaxation tapes that teach your how to meditate using deep breathing and release negative

or fearful feelings. For complete information on amino acids for pain, stress, anxiety and depression read *Heal with Amino Acids* or *The Anxiety Epidemic*, *GABA: the Anxiety Amino Acid*, and *Theanine, the Relaxation Amino Acid*. All are available through Pain & Stress Center at 800.669.2256 or www.painstresscenter.com.

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