

THE SECRET DISEASE

high ANXIETY

Lucy Gotell

Your heart is racing and your palms sweat. Perhaps you're worried about that big speech you have to give or you're rushing to meet a demanding work deadline. There may be another much likelier—yet far less understood—explanation.

Heart palpitations, profuse sweating, and emotional turmoil are all symptoms of anxiety, a host of mental disorders that, according to the Anxiety Disorders Association of Canada, affect approximately 12 percent of the Canadian population.

Depending on the type of anxiety disorder, additional symptoms can include excessive worry, uncontrollable thoughts and behaviours, avoidance of situations or people, and impaired concentration.

Despite its prevalence and debilitating effects, anxiety might well be dubbed the "secret disease." For while 12 percent of people may be *diagnosed* with anxiety in a given year, many more suffer in silence.

OFTEN LEFT UNTREATED

According to Raymond Gunter, a clinical psychology intern at the Anxiety Disorders Clinic at UBC Hospital in Vancouver, fewer than 20 percent of those who meet the criteria for an anxiety disorder actually seek treatment. >

TYPES OF ANXIETY DISORDERS

- generalized anxiety
- obsessive compulsive disorder
- panic disorder
- phobias
- social anxiety
- separation anxiety

“People don’t get [cognitive behavioural] treatment for anxiety nearly as often as we might recommend,” Gunter says. “It’s an underserved population, which is unfortunate given that surveys have pretty much universally indicated that anxiety disorders are the most common mental health concern.”

People may not seek treatment for several reasons. According to Margaret

Drewlo, a mental health counsellor in Vancouver, many anxiety sufferers don’t attribute their symptoms to a diagnosable disorder.

“Often people think that they’re just doing too much or that the pace of their life is too quick,” Drewlo says.

Another factor is self-blame.

“People may tell themselves that they’re ineffectual and weak, and that there’s something wrong with them, but they won’t consider the possibility that they have a diagnosable problem that could respond quite well to treatment,” says Gunter.

THERAPY CAN HELP

As is true of any mental illness, treatment is vital. Unchecked, anxiety can affect an individual’s daily routine, making social and professional life difficult, if not impossible. Anxiety can lead to depression or agoraphobia (fear of being in places where help might not be available) and substance abuse. Although medication is a frequently prescribed, other options exist.

Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) identifies and challenges the irrational belief systems that often underlie an individual’s anxiety. Sometimes CBT systematically exposes the patient to their fears, gradually giving them control over their response. Often the patient learns how to slow their breathing and use meditation whenever they feel anxious.

Natural therapies, such as herbal nerve tonics, supplements, or aromatherapy, may also be helpful in alleviating minor symptoms of anxiety. Consult a natural health practitioner when considering such remedies.

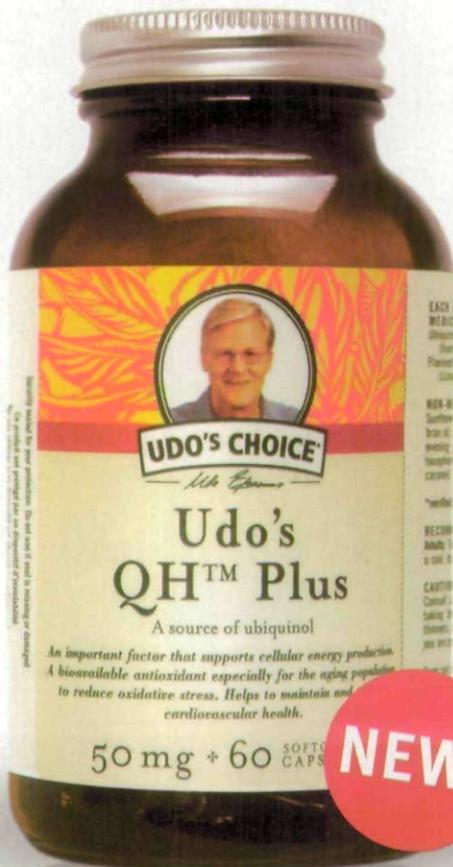
If you think you may be suffering from an anxiety disorder, visit the Anxiety Disorders Association of Canada’s website at anxietycanada.ca for information and support. **a**

Lucy Gotell is a student at the University of British Columbia’s School of Journalism. She holds a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Prince Edward Island.

BABYBOOMERS AND BEYOND:

Recharge your batteries!

Udo’s QH™ Plus. FOR A YOUNGER, STRONGER HEART.



What is QH?

QH is the preconverted form of CoQ10, ready for immediate utilization.

Why do you need it?

Energy production: QH is critical to producing 90-95% of energy in your cells—especially in the heart.

As we age, our ability to produce CoQ10 and convert it to QH decreases. The result is less energy and decreased protection against free radical damage.

Why the plus in Udo’s QH™ Plus?

Maximum absorption: Because QH is fat-soluble, Flora brings you Udo’s QH™ Plus in a base of organic, unrefined, non-GMO, cold-fresh-pressed Udo’s Oil™ for the best delivery and assimilation.



Copyright of *Alive: Canadian Journal of Health & Nutrition* is the property of Alive Publishing and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.