

Mental Health: Anxiety Disorders, Risk Factors, Symptoms and More

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Introduction

According to MSF reports from 2015, almost 1 million adults (26%) in Kashmir Valley were showing indicators of a possible anxiety-related disorder, and the number of cases has continued to rise since then due to ongoing political unrest and the distress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Transient uneasy sensations or random outbursts of worry and panic are not the same as anxiety disorders. Anxiety disorders are diagnosable mental illnesses that cause major disruptions in a person's daily life due to acute, recurring symptoms. Anxiety sufferers may exhibit unpleasant physical, behavioural, and psychological symptoms such as illogical dread, high heart rate, digestive issues, and unhappiness in everyday situations. People with anxiety disorders are more likely to overuse drugs or alcohol to cope with overwhelming thoughts and sensations, but this just worsens their condition. If anxiety disorder symptoms are not treated properly, they may last a lifetime [1].

Anxiety disorders are linked to mental health crises such as panic attacks, suicidal ideation, and self-harm. A crisis can be addressed if a person receives mental health first aid, and this kind of compassionate intervention can be the first step toward good anxiety treatment.

Mental health first aid is a type of emergency assistance that you can learn to provide to someone experiencing a mental health crisis, such as an anxiety attack. As a first responder, you may be able to assist someone in regaining control after an anxiety attack, while it cannot replace emergency medical treatment or long-term counseling [2,3].

Risk Factors for Anxiety Disorder

Anxiety disorders are rarely caused by a single factor, but they can be triggered by perceived threats in the environment. Long-term anxiety disorders are caused by a complex set of risk factors, including:

- Anxiety and excessive shyness during adolescence
- Traumatic life events or experiences
- A sensitive emotional nature
- Perceiving the environment as threatening
- Negative childhood events
- Difficult-to-manage medical issues, such as heart and respiratory ailments

Those who are most likely to develop an anxiety condition include:

- You have a family history of mental illness, including anxiety and/or mood disorders.
- Have a history of drug or alcohol misuse in your family
- Suffering from drug or alcohol abuse
- Are they female? (Women are twice as likely as males to suffer from anxiety problems.)

Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder

Anxiety disorders are mental illnesses that can affect every area of a person's body as well as every element of their lives. Anxiety disorders can cause a variety of symptoms, including:

Physical signs and symptoms: Chest discomfort, hyperventilation, stomach pains, muscular aches, and tremors are all symptoms of a heart attack.

Excessive or unreasonable dread and worry, racing thoughts, poor attention and memory, disorientation, restlessness, and sleep difficulties are all psychological symptoms.

Behavioral symptoms include avoiding people or social situations, engaging in compulsive behaviours such as checking and rechecking, and having a dread of specific objects or situations.

Symptoms of a Panic Attack

As a mental health first responder, you should be aware of the signs and symptoms of panic attacks, which are brief bursts of acute terror that can occur in any anxiety disorder. The following are signs and symptoms of a panic attack: Headache; Excessive perspiration; Trembling, trembling, or rocking back and forth; Nausea or vomiting; Lightheadedness, dizziness, Hot or cold flashes; Crying; Rapid heart rate; Numbness; Chest discomfort; Abdominal pain; Detachment from reality; Fear of losing control; Fear of dying

Early Intervention in Anxiety Disorders

Many anxiety disorders begin in infancy or adolescence, but they are not recognized or treated until later in life. If left untreated, anxiety problems can worsen, leading to the development of additional mental illnesses, substance addiction disorders, and suicidal ideations.

If a person's anxiety remains unnoticed or dismissed by loved ones, mental health first aid may be the only sympathetic help they receive. As a first responder, you may provide support and comfort, but you can also urge someone to get expert care before their sickness worsens [4].

References

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