

Generalised Anxiety Disorder

INFORMATION SHEET

WHAT IS GENERALISED ANXIETY DISORDER?

Generalised Anxiety Disorder, or GAD for short, is a type of anxiety disorder that's chronic, involving excessive worry and tension. GAD may come on gradually, with many people reporting feeling at least mild anxiety symptoms for their entire lives. An anxiety disorder can begin at any time — in childhood, adolescence, or even late adulthood. GAD is reportedly more common in women than in men and often occurs in relatives of people with anxiety disorders, meaning there may be a genetic component.

People with GAD imagine the worst happening (and worry about all the possible worst case scenarios). They believe future events are almost always negative, and they won't be able to cope 'when' these things 'do' happen.

COMMON ELEMENTS OF GAD

Worry about future events; real and hypothetical - 'what if...'

Worry about worry - 'worry will send me crazy', 'I will lose control'

Positive beliefs about worry - 'worrying will mean I am prepared for/ can prevent something bad happening', 'worrying means that I care'

Intolerance of uncertainty - gaining certainty in reassurance, planning, researching OR avoiding uncertainty by avoiding situations

GAD is treatable and can be addressed using medication although psychotherapy is recommended.



ANXIETY =
OVERESTIMATING THE DANGER
AND UNDERESTIMATING YOUR
ABILITY TO COPE

COMMON SYMPTOMS

- Worrying excessively about situations or activities in your life.
- Spending most days worrying about how you will cope with events
- Experiencing difficulty in controlling your worries.
- Experiencing any of the following physical symptoms:
 - Feeling restless and on edge
 - Feeling fatigued
 - Difficulty concentrating
 - Irritability
 - Muscle tension
 - Headaches
 - Difficulty in falling or staying asleep