

Anxiety Disorders

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1. Overview

- Anxiety disorders involve excessive fear or worry that is disproportionate to the actual situation and interferes with daily life.

2. Common Types

- **Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)**: chronic, excessive worry about many areas of life.
- **Panic Disorder**: recurrent, unexpected panic attacks with physical symptoms (racing heart, shortness of breath).
- **Phobias**: intense, irrational fear of a specific object or situation.
- **Social Anxiety Disorder**: fear of social or performance situations.

3. Causes

- Genetic predisposition, imbalances in neurotransmitters (e.g., GABA, serotonin), learned fear responses, and chronic stress.

4. Symptoms

- Physical: rapid heartbeat, sweating, trembling.
- Cognitive: excessive worry, catastrophizing.
- Behavioral: avoidance of feared situations.

5. Treatment Approaches

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), exposure therapy, relaxation techniques, and medication (e.g., SSRIs) when needed.