Anxiety

The Mississippi Department of Mental Health is working to change the way you think about mental illness. Our goal is to eliminate misconceptions about and to promote a better understanding of mental health. It's time for us to change the way we think about mental illness. It's time to think again.

What is anxiety?

People worry about all kinds of every day things—money, family, work, health. It's normal. But when you worry about these things when you have little reason to focus on them, it could be Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD). This disorder makes it difficult for people to control their anxiety and focus on their lives.

What causes Generalized Anxiety Disorder?

Several parts of the brain, as well as biological processes, can play a role in fear and anxiety. Researchers are looking for ways in which stress and environmental factors play a role in anxiety. Like other mental illnesses, GAD can run families, but no one knows for sure why some family members may have it but others don't.

What are the signs and symptoms?

GAD can develop slowly, but it often starts during someone's teenage years or in young adulthood. Some signs may include excessive worrying about everyday issues, or someone having trouble controlling their worries or nervousness. Someone may even know they are worrying much more than they should, but still feel restless and have trouble relaxing.

Other signs and symptoms include:

- Difficulty concentrating

- Being startled easily

- Feeling tired or becoming easily tired

- Difficulty falling or staying asleep

- Trembling or twitching

- Excessive sweating, feeling light-headed, or getting out of breath

Children and teens may worry about their performance in school or sports. Adults with GAD are usually more nervous about everyday issues like their jobs, health, finances, or their family responsibilities. Both children and adults can experience physical symptoms related to their anxiety that affect everyday life.

What treatment is available?

Talk to your doctor to make sure there is not an unrelated physical problem. Both medication and therapy can be helpful in treating anxiety disorders. For more information, or if you need immediate help, call the Department of Mental Health help line at 1-877-210-8513.

DMH
Mississippi Department of Mental Health
Supporting a Better Tomorrow...One Person at a Time

HELPLINE • 1-877-210-8513

All information obtained from the National Institute of Mental Health at www.nimh.nih.gov.

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