



July 2008

## In This Issue

- What is Anxiety?
- How does Generalized Anxiety Disorder develop?
- How common is GAD?
- Signs and Symptoms
- How to treat Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Who can help me?
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder Checklist

Online Resources may be found at the bottom of this newsletter.

## Anxiety



### What is Anxiety?

Anxiety characterized as a normal reaction to stress, in which a person may be justified for feelings of nervousness, apprehension, fear, or worry; i.e. anticipation of taking a test or worry about a loved one.<sup>2</sup> But when anxiety becomes an excessive fear or dread of everyday situations, it has become a immobilizing disorder.<sup>1</sup> There are 5 common types of anxiety including: Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Panic Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and Social Phobia (or Social Anxiety Disorder). The main focus of this newsletter will be Generalized Anxiety Disorder.

### How does Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) develop?

Persons with GAD go through their days filled with excessive worry and tension, although there is very little to incite it. Their exaggerated or over anticipated worry of disaster can be caused by health issues, money, family problems, difficulties at work, or a variety of other problems. People with GAD cannot get rid of their incessant fears and worries, and most realize that their anxiety is more than what the situation calls for.<sup>1</sup>

### How common is GAD?

GAD affects about 6.8 million adult Americans, and about twice as many women as men.<sup>1</sup> The risk for GAD is highest between childhood and middle age, about it can span across the life cycle.<sup>1</sup>

### Signs and Symptoms:

- Unable to relax
- Startle Easily
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Have trouble falling asleep/Fatigue
- Headaches
- Muscle tension/Muscle aches

- Trembling/Twitching
- Sweating
- Nausea
- Irritability

## How can GAD be treated?



When a person is diagnosed with GAD, they must have had an excessive worry or fear about everyday problems for at least 6 months.<sup>1</sup> Often times other anxiety disorders, depression, or substance abuse accompanies GAD. Treatment of GAD is usually done with cognitive-behavioral therapy, as well as medication.

Therapy is a critical part of dealing with GAD. Therapy can help you learn more about why you have excessive worries, as well as how to deal with these worries on a daily basis. If you notice yourself or a loved one with any of the signs or symptoms of GAD, look into getting treatment.

### Who can help me?

Here at Psychological Health-Roanoke there are many counselors that can help treat you or a loved one with Generalized Anxiety Disorder.

Some of these include:

- Dorene Fick, LCSW
- Jane C. Hundley, LCSW
- David Meshorer, Ph.D.
- Sam Rogers, Ph.D.
- Bruce Sellars, Psy.D.
- Jennifer Slusher, Ph.D. & LPC
- Catherine G. Taylor, Psy.D.

### GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER CHECKLIST

1. In the last six months have you been particularly nervous or anxious? Yes  No
2. Do you worry much about bad things that might happen? Yes  No
3. In the last six months, would you say you have been worrying more days than not? Yes  No

### Contact Us

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30-5:00pm. Evening hours are available on a limited basis.

(540) 989-6605 or 800-699-9396

Nights and weekends call RESPOND:

(540) 776-1100 or 800-541-9992

Advantage EAP does not necessarily endorse any products or services mentioned.

4. Do you find it difficult to control worrying? Yes  No

5. The anxiety and worry are associated with at least three of the following six symptoms (with at least some symptoms present for more days than not for past six months).

a. restless  feeling keyed-up  or on edge

b. easily fatigued

c. difficulty concentrating  or mind going blank

d. irritability

e. muscle tension

f. sleep disturbance (difficulty going to or staying asleep, or restless unsatisfying sleep)

At least three of these symptoms meet threshold of DSM-IV?

#### References:

1. National Institute of Mental Health, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/anxiety-disorders/generalized-anxiety-disorder-gad.shtml>
  2. eMedicineHealth, Anxiety [http://www.emedicinehealth.com/anxiety/article\\_em.htm](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/anxiety/article_em.htm)
-