

ANXIETY DISORDERS

GENERALLY, WHAT ARE THEY?

PATHOLOGY & CAUSES

Mental disorders characterized by excessive, unreasonable fear, distress

May be omnipresent/in response to particular stimulus

Awareness of condition often causes more distress

CAUSES

May be genetic, environmental

Often associated with other mental disorders (mood, substance-related)

DIAGNOSIS

Excessive, unreasonable fear/distress

Struggle to control symptoms

Lasts > six months

Affects day-to-day functioning

Not explained by other condition/substance

TREATMENT

MEDICATIONS

Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), other antidepressants, benzodiazepines

PSYCHOTHERAPY

E.g. cognitive behavioral therapy

Identify, explain thoughts/feelings.

change flawed ones

Better long-term prognosis; no side effects, no dependency

AGORAPHOBIA

PATHOLOGY & CAUSES

Fear, avoidance of public places

Individuals refuse to leave "safety" of home.

CAUSES

May be genetic, environmental

Associated with other anxiety disorders.

e.g. panic disorder

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Fast heartbeat, dizziness, trembling

Thinking about/avoidance of public places causes distress

DIAGNOSIS

Unreasonable fear/anxiety associated with public places

Caused by underlying fear of feeling trapped, unable to receive help Resulting avoidance of public places

Lasts > six months

Distress affects day-to-day functioning

Not explained by other condition/substance

TREATMENT

MEDICATIONS

SSRIs, benzodiazepines

PSYCHOTHERAPY

E.g. cognitive behavioral therapy.

systematic desensitization

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

PATHOLOGY & CAUSES

Excessive, unreasonable, persistent fear, distress

CAUSES

May be genetic, environmental; higher in some groups

Associated with depressive disorders

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Restlessness, difficulty concentrating, irritability

Muscle tension (aching and soreness).

fatigue, insomnia (chronic fatigue)

DIAGNOSIS

Excessive, unreasonable anxiety

Struggle to control anxiety

Persistent fear/distress, nausea, difficulty

sleeping, headache

> three symptoms listed above (children >
one year old)

Lasts > six months

Distress affects day-to-day functioning

Not explained by other condition/substance

TREATMENT

MEDICATIONS

SSRIs, antidepressants, benzodiazepines

PSYCHOTHERAPY

E.g. cognitive behavioral therapy

PANIC DISORDER

PATHOLOGY & CAUSES

Recurrent panic attacks sudden periods of intense fear/discomfort

Attacks unpredictable.

CAUSES

May be genetic, environmental; higher in.

some groups

Associated with major depressive disorder, social and generalized anxiety disorders.

obsessive-compulsive disorder

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Feelings of choking, derealization, fear of losing control/dying

Elevated heart rate, chest pain/discomfort, sweating, trembling, shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, chills, numbness

DIAGNOSIS

Recurrent, unpredictable panic attacks (> two)

Distress affects day-to-day functioning

Behavioral changes to avoid further attacks

Presence of > four symptoms

Not explained by other condition/substance

TREATMENT

MEDICATIONS

SSRIs and other antidepressants,

benzodiazepines

Antiseizure medications

PSYCHOTHERAPY

E.g. cognitive behavioral therapy

PHOBIAS

PATHOLOGY & CAUSES

Excessive, unreasonable, persistent fear resulting in avoidance of particular object/ situations (phobic stimulus)

TYPES

As listed in the DSM-5

Fear of animals

- Fear of natural environment.

Fear of blood, needles

Situational fears.

"Other" fears (AKA none of the above)

CAUSES

May be genetic, environmental

Associated with anxiety, mood, substance

use disorders

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Response to phobic stimulus: elevated

heartbeat, dizziness, trembling

Excessive thinking about/avoidance of

phobic stimulus causes distress

DIAGNOSIS

Unreasonable fear/anxiety associated with phobic stimulus

Resulting avoidance (which may itself cause distress) of phobic stimulus

Lasts > six months

Distress affects day-to-day functioning

Not explained by other condition/substance

TREATMENT

MEDICATIONS

SSRIs, benzodiazepines

PSYCHOTHERAPY

E.g. cognitive behavioral therapy.

systematic desensitization.

SEPARATION ANXIETY DISORDER

PATHOLOGY & CAUSES

Excessive, unreasonable, persistent fear of being separated from individual/location

CAUSES

May be genetic, environmental

Associated with all other anxiety disorders

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Distress caused by thought of experiencing separation

Nightmares, headaches, nausea

DIAGNOSIS

Excessive, unreasonable, persistent fear of being separated from individual/location Adults:
lasts > six months

Children: lasts > four weeks

Not explained by other condition/substance

TREATMENT

MEDICATIONS

SSRIs, benzodiazepines

PSYCHOTHERAPY

E.g. cognitive behavioral therapy

SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER

PATHOLOGY & CAUSES

Excessive, unreasonable, persistent fear of being judged Avoidance of social situations

CAUSES

May be genetic, environmental; higher in some groups

Associated with mood disorders. substance-related disorders, eating disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Trembling, blushing, derealization

Excessive thinking about/avoidance of social situations/circumstances, associated distress

DIAGNOSIS

Excessive, unreasonable, persistent fear of being judged

Avoidance of social situations/ circumstances, associated distress

Fear of others judging anxious feelings Lasts > six months.

Distress affects day-to-day functioning

Not explained by other condition/substance

TREATMENT

MEDICATIONS

SSRIs, antidepressants, benzodiazepines

PSYCHOTHERAPY

E.g. cognitive behavioral therapy