**Anxiety**

Occasional anxiety is an expected part of life. You might feel anxious when faced with a problem at work, before taking a test, or before making an important decision. But anxiety disorders involve more than temporary worry or fear. For a person with an anxiety disorder, the anxiety does not go away and can get worse over time. The symptoms can interfere with daily activities such as job performance, school work, and relationships.

There are several types of anxiety disorders, including generalized anxiety disorder, and specific phobia-related disorders.

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder**

People with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) display excessive anxiety or worry, most days for at least 6 months, about a number of things such as personal health, work, social interactions, and everyday routine life circumstances. The fear and anxiety can cause significant problems in areas of their life, such as social interactions, school, and work.

Generalized anxiety disorder symptoms include:

* Feeling restless, wound-up, or on-edge
* Being easily fatigued
* Having difficulty concentrating; mind going blank
* Being irritable
* Having muscle tension
* Difficulty controlling feelings of worry
* Having sleep problems, such as difficulty falling or staying asleep, restlessness, or unsatisfying sleep

**Separation anxiety disorder**

Separation anxiety is often thought of as something that only children deal with; however, adults can also be diagnosed with separation anxiety disorder. People who have separation anxiety disorder have fears about being parted from people to whom they are attached. They often worry that some sort of harm or something untoward will happen to their attachment figures while they are separated. This fear leads them to avoid being separated from their attachment figures and to avoid being alone. People with separation anxiety may have nightmares about being separated from attachment figures or experience physical symptoms when separation occurs or is anticipated.

**Selective mutism**

A somewhat rare disorder associated with anxiety is *selective mutism*. Selective mutism occurs when people fail to speak in specific social situations despite having normal language skills. Selective mutism usually occurs before the age of 5 and is often associated with extreme shyness, fear of social embarrassment, compulsive traits, withdrawal, clinging behavior, and temper tantrums. People diagnosed with selective mutism are often also diagnosed with other anxiety disorders.

**Treatments**

There are many ways to treat anxiety and people should work with their doctor to choose the treatment that is best for them.

* Stress Management
* Therapy
* Support Groups
* Medical Treatment

(Information taken from: *Anxiety Disorders*, NIMH, July 2018)