



# GENERALISED ANXIETY DISORDER

## *Sutton*

### What is Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)?

Anxiety is something that everyone experiences from time to time, but when it becomes overwhelming or continuous it can impact on our day to day life. GAD is a condition where you have excessive anxiety most days which makes you feel ill and tired.

GAD is quite common and will affect approximately 1 in 50 of us at some point. The main symptom of GAD is persistent worrying. You may be worrying about several things at once, or you may feel anxious even if you do not have anything to worry about. You may find yourself being worried about being worried (see symptom box).

### What are the treatments for anxiety?

Treatment for anxiety can involve a variety of different approaches, including psychological therapy, medication and self-help.

There are some life-style changes that can help, including learning relaxation techniques, regular exercise and a reduction in stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine - your GP will be able to advise you, or you can find out more information on some of the websites and books listed overleaf.

If the anxiety persists your GP may refer you to the Psychological Therapies in Primary Care service (PTiPC) in Sutton. This service provides guided self-help, group therapy and some individual Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). You can find out more information about psychological therapies in the websites and books listed overleaf.

Your GP may suggest medication that can assist in managing anxiety. There is a range of short-term and long-term medication. You can find out more about the medications available in the websites listed overleaf.

If the anxiety persists after being seen by PTiPC and receiving a course of medication you may be referred to the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT). The CMHT provides specialist mental health services and will offer a care package which may include medication management, psychological therapy and social support. The CMHT may refer you to other services within the Trust that specialise in particular therapies.

**Symptoms of Generalised Anxiety**  
**When anxious you may experience**  
**some of the symptoms described**  
**below.**

#### **Psychological Symptoms**

- Continuously worrying, even if you don't have anything to worry about
- Feeling restless
- Finding it hard to relax
- Feeling tired most of the time
- Finding it difficult to concentrate
- Having a tendency for your mind to go blank
- Feeling irritable most of the time,

#### **Physical Symptoms**

- Feeling physically tense, sometimes leading to muscle pain
- Getting headaches
- Experiencing an irregular or fast heart beat (palpitations )
- Feeling a tightness or pain in your chest
- Sweating
- Experiencing hot or cold flushes,
- Feeling sick (nausea), experiencing stomach pains, and diarrhoea.

Many of the physical symptoms of anxiety are similar to other problems, so it is important to talk to your doctor if you are worrying or feeling anxious about something to ensure the right treatment is offered.

*A diagnosis should only be made by a health professional.*



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### Useful sources of information and support in Sutton

There is a lot of information about mental health available on the Internet and in books. Occasionally these are not from reliable sources and may provide mis-information. While service users and mental health professionals have recommended these websites, books and services, we cannot guarantee their quality nor can we take responsibility for the impact that the resources and services will have on you. The websites and books listed here are not an exhaustive list.

#### Websites

- [www.rcpsych.ac.uk/campaigns/changingminds/mentaldisorders/anxiety.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/campaigns/changingminds/mentaldisorders/anxiety.aspx)
- [www.mind.org.uk/Information/Booklets/Understanding/Understanding+anxiety.htm#What\\_is\\_anxiety](http://www.mind.org.uk/Information/Booklets/Understanding/Understanding+anxiety.htm#What_is_anxiety)
- [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/articles/article.aspx?articleId=28&sectionId=22278](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/articles/article.aspx?articleId=28&sectionId=22278)
- [www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/23069094/](http://www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/23069094/)
- [www.nopanic.org.uk](http://www.nopanic.org.uk)
- [www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinformation/therapies/cognitivebehaviouraltherapy.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinformation/therapies/cognitivebehaviouraltherapy.aspx)

#### Books

- The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook by Bourne, E. J. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed) ISBN: 1572244135.
- Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway: How to Turn Your Fear and Indecision into Confidence and Action by S. Jeffers ISBN: 091907071
- Mind Over Mood: Cognitive Treatment Therapy Manual for Clients by Padesky, C., & Greenberger, D Guilford Press. ISBN: 0898621283
- Cognitive Therapy of Anxiety Disorders: A Practical Guide by A. Wells ISBN: 047196476X
- Overcoming Anxiety by Helen Kennerley ISBN: 1854874225

**Local non-NHS services** Your GP will also be able to advise you of local services and how to contact them.

#### No Panic (Sutton)

A self-help discussion group held weekly or fortnightly for people who suffer from an anxiety disorder. Provides support and information. Please call before attending.

**Telephone** 020 8644 0363

#### Private Therapy

If you are interested in seeking private therapy it is recommended that you find a therapist through one of these professional bodies:

**British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies** [www.babcp.com](http://www.babcp.com)

**British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy**  
[www.bacp.co.uk/seeking\\_therapist/index.html](http://www.bacp.co.uk/seeking_therapist/index.html)

**British Psychological Society**  
[www.bps.org.uk/e-services/find-a-psychologist/psychoindex.cfm](http://www.bps.org.uk/e-services/find-a-psychologist/psychoindex.cfm)

#### Other Useful Numbers

**SaneLine:** 0845 767 8000 (Monday- Sunday 1-11pm)

**Samaritans:** 08457 90 90 90 (everyday, 24 hours)

**NHS Direct:** 0845 46467 (every day, 24 hours)

There are other voluntary services in Sutton that may be useful but not directly linked to anxiety, please ask your GP for more information.