

# Generalized Anxiety (GA)

## GOOD ANXIETY-BAD ANXIETY

Anxiety is a normal reaction to stress. It helps one deal with a tense situation in the office, study harder for an exam, keep focused on an important speech. In general, it helps one cope. But when anxiety becomes an excessive, irrational dread of everyday situations, it can make life very difficult.



## DOES THIS SOUND LIKE YOU?

Do you worry all the time? Check any problems you have had often over the last six months.

- I never stop worrying about things big and small.
- I have headaches and other aches and pains for no reason.
- I am tense a lot and have trouble relaxing.
- I have trouble keeping my mind on one thing.
- I get crabby or grouchy.
- I have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep.
- I sweat and have hot flashes.
- I sometimes have a lump in my throat or feel like I need to throw up when I am worried.

If you have some of these symptoms, you may have Generalized Anxiety (GA) and to help you find out, it may be best to check it out with a counselor.

## GENERALIZED ANXIETY (GA)

GA is much more than the normal anxiety people experience day to day. It's chronic and fills one's day with exaggerated worry and tension, even though there is little or nothing to provoke it. It means always anticipating disaster, often worrying excessively about health, money, family, or work. Sometimes, though, the source of the worry is hard to pinpoint. Simply the thought of

getting through the day provokes anxiety. With GA, people can't seem to shake their concerns, even though they usually realize that their anxiety is more intense than the situation warrants. Their worries are accompanied by physical symptoms, especially fatigue, headaches, muscle tension, muscle aches, difficulty swallowing, trembling, twitching, irritability, sweating, and hot flashes. They may feel lightheaded, out of breath, or they may feel nauseated or have to go to the bathroom frequently. Individuals with generalized anxiety seem unable to relax, and they may startle more easily than other people. They tend to have difficulty concentrating and often they have trouble falling or staying asleep. When impairment is mild, people may be able to function in social settings or on the job. If severe, however, it can be very debilitating, making it difficult to carry out even the most ordinary daily activities.

## CAUSE & IMPACT

Some research suggests that GA may run in families, and it may also grow worse during stress. It affects about 4 million adult Americans and about twice as many women as men, and usually begins at an earlier age and symptoms may manifest themselves more slowly than in most other types of anxiety. It comes on gradually and can begin across the life cycle, though the risk is highest between childhood and middle age. It is common to be accompanied by depression, panic, social phobia, eating disorder, or alcohol or drug abuse.

## GETTING HELP

If you are experiencing unusual or extreme anxiety, it is important to talk with a counselor who can help you determine what steps should be taken to obtain relief. Contact the UW-L Counseling and Testing Center today to set up an appointment.

Source: [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)



THE UWL COUNSELING AND TESTING CENTER STAFF ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP THOSE STUDENTS WHO ARE DEALING WITH ANXIETY AND OTHER LIFE ISSUES. CALL (608)785-8073 TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO TALK WITH A COUNSELOR.