

ANXIETY:

IT'S REAL, IT'S SERIOUS
...GET HELP

Getting Help, Getting Treatment

Anxiety disorders are treatable, yet only one-third of those diagnosed receive treatment. Often the costs of therapy or prescription drugs deter people from getting the help they need.

THERAPY

Many forms of therapy are effective for anxiety disorders. Depending on your health insurance, behavioral or psychological health care may have limited coverage or not be covered at all. Some therapists and clinics charge on a sliding scale. Ask about payment options when you call or visit for a consultation. To find a therapist near you, go to www.adaa.org and click on *Find a Therapist*.

Many federally funded health centers offer mental health services for those without health insurance or with a limited budget. The amount of payment is based on income. Locate a center at <http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov>.

Students at some colleges and universities may have access to low-cost therapy for anxiety disorders and other mental health problems. Call about campus health services, as well as the psychology, psychiatry, or behavioral health department to inquire about sessions with graduate students.



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Medications can be costly. Find out which medications are covered by your insurance and discuss this with your doctor.

Most pharmaceutical companies offer patient-assistance programs for uninsured and underinsured patients. These programs provide prescribed medication at little to no cost. Visit the Partnership for Prescription Assistance site at www.pparx.org for more information.

Generic drugs are a cheaper alternative to brand-name medications. Ask your doctor if a generic version of the medication is available and if it's a viable alternative for you.

OTHER RESOURCES

If you are a U.S. citizen with low income, you may be eligible for Medicaid. Coverage includes mental health treatment costs; eligibility and services provided vary by state. If you are 65 years or older, you may be eligible for Medicare, which includes medical insurance and prescription drug coverage. Get more information at www.cms.hhs.gov.

Before medications are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or before certain therapy methods are widely accepted as effective, they are tested on volunteers in a clinical trial. To participate in a clinical trial, search at www.adaa.org/clinicaltrials or www.clinicaltrials.gov.

Support groups encourage recovery through mutual support and by providing updated information about treatment for anxiety disorders; they are not a substitute for professional care. Search for a support group at www.adaa.org/supportgroups.

New treatments—medications and therapies—are being developed all the time. Visit www.adaa.org for updates, and ask your doctor about what's new.

Medications for Anxiety Disorders

Four major classes of medications are used to treat anxiety disorders.

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- MEDICATION 1** **SSRI (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor)**
GENERIC NAMES citalopram, escitalopram, fluoxetine, paroxetine, sertraline
HOW IT WORKS *Relieves symptoms by blocking the reabsorption, or reuptake, of serotonin by certain nerve cells in the brain. This leaves more serotonin available, which enhances neurotransmission—the sending of nerve impulses—and improves mood. SSRIs are “selective” because they affect only serotonin and not other neurotransmitters.*
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- MEDICATION 2** **SNRI (serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor)**
GENERIC NAMES venlafaxine, duloxetine
HOW IT WORKS *Increases the levels of the neurotransmitters serotonin and norepinephrine by inhibiting their reabsorption into cells in the brain.*
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- MEDICATION 3** **Tricyclic antidepressant**
GENERIC NAMES amitriptyline, imipramine, nortriptyline
HOW IT WORKS *Inhibits the reabsorption of the neurotransmitters serotonin and norepinephrine. (Has been increasingly replaced by SSRIs.)*
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- MEDICATION 4** **Benzodiazepine**
GENERIC NAMES alprazolam, clonazepam, diazepam, lorazepam
HOW IT WORKS *Promotes relaxation and reducing muscular tension and other physical symptoms of anxiety. Frequently used for short-term management of anxiety, such as for minor medical procedures.*
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Other medications may also be used to treat anxiety disorders, including **MAOIs (monoamine oxidase inhibitors), anticonvulsants, beta blockers, and atypical antipsychotics** (also known as second-generation antipsychotics). Talk to your physician about the best treatment for you.

If you experience a side effect of any medication, contact your physician.

Do not stop taking a medication abruptly because it may create other health risks.

Visit the ADAA website at **www.adaa.org** to read more about medications. Use the *Find a Therapist* directory to identify therapists who treat anxiety disorders in your area.

You can make a difference by helping ADAA expand its efforts to reach those with anxiety disorders. Your contribution supports ADAA's efforts to increase awareness that anxiety disorders are real, serious, and treatable. ADAA relies on your donations to provide free educational information about anxiety disorders, help people find treatment, support research, and advocate for improved treatments and access to care.

Donate online at www.adaa.org, on the phone (240-485-1001), or by mail to ADAA, 8730 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910. All donations are tax-deductible.

The Anxiety Disorders Association of America (ADAA) is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the prevention, treatment, and cure of anxiety and anxiety-related disorders and to improve the lives of all people who suffer from them.



For more information:

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