

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

Frequently Asked Questions

1Q What is generalized anxiety disorder (**GAD**)?

A More commonly known as anxiety disorder, **GAD** is a behavioral health condition that can affect both adults and children and requires a medical diagnosis. People who have **GAD** are fearful or worried over long periods of time without relief.

2Q When should someone seek a medical diagnosis?

A Occasional anxiety is normal, but if anxiety interrupts daily activities, it is time to seek medical help.

3Q How common is **GAD**?

A In the US, 6.8 million adults have **GAD** in any given year. The resettlement process puts refugees at higher risk of developing signs of behavioral health disorders, including **GAD**.

4Q What are the most common symptoms of **GAD**?

A

- Daytime restlessness
- Daytime sleepiness
- Inability to focus attention
- Irritability
- Muscle tension
- Sleep problems (difficulty falling or staying asleep, restlessness, unsatisfying sleep)

5Q What are the most common causes of **GAD**?

A

- Being a member of a family with a history of **GAD**
- Having limited financial resources
- Lacking supportive social systems
- Moving to an unfamiliar or unpredictable environment
- Stressful childhood or adulthood experiences

6Q What are some common **GAD** treatments?

A After diagnosis, doctors may prescribe medicine or professional therapy to treat **GAD** symptoms. All of the following also can help address **GAD**:

- Choosing healthful foods
- Exercising regularly
- Interacting with supportive friends and family members
- Practicing mindfulness
- Relaxing

7Q What might make it difficult for some people to find help for **GAD**?

- A** —Insufficient money and / or resources
- Lack of supportive networks of friends or family members
- Language barriers
- Stigma
- Transportation barriers

8Q How can language become a barrier to receiving **GAD** help?

- A** **LEP** (limited English proficiency) individuals may experience inadequate interpretation and translation services.⁴ Resettled refugees and immigrants may not have words in their native languages that correspond to English terms that describe their behavioral health concerns.

9Q How can stigma become a barrier to receiving **GAD** help?

- A** A sense of shame or fear of discrimination can prevent people from seeking a diagnosis, taking medicine, going to therapy, finding a job, and living successfully in community settings.

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