

Treatment

If someone is suffering from GAD, it is a good idea to seek professional help. For it is generally known that GAD hardly ever goes away on its own. Fortunately, there are effective treatments for GAD.

The first-choice treatment for GAD is so-called “**metacognitive therapy**” (MCT), which is a form of cognitive behavioral therapy. This is the best researched treatment protocol for GAD and is therefore included in various guidelines worldwide. Several studies have also shown that MCT is more effective than a number of other treatments of GAD.

In a nutshell, the goal of MCT is that a specialized therapist helps people to deal with their worrying and look at their worrying differently. After all, people with GAD not only worry *about* their problems, but also start to worry *about the worrying*. People with GAD get the idea that all their worrying causes psychological and physical symptoms, which makes worrying an annoying and uncontrollable thing (“I am going crazy because of all that worrying!”, or “I can never stop worrying!”). By learning to recognize and reverse these negative thoughts about worrying, people often succeed in regaining more control over their worry and thoughts, which in the end results in fewer complaints.

More information

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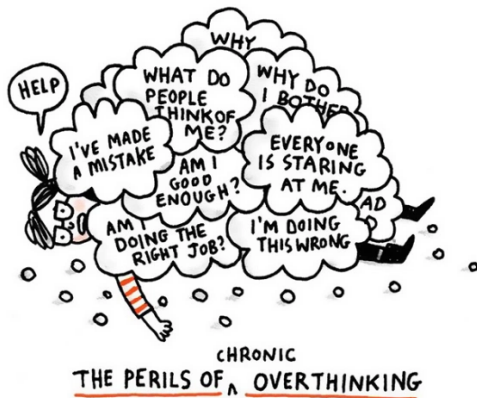
GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

General information



Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a condition that affects many people. Sometimes it is also referred to as “**ruminating disorder**” because people with this diagnosis worry all the time.



Gemma Correll '15

Globally, between 1% and 3% of people are at risk of developing GAD, which is more common in more developed countries, and women are about twice as likely to suffer from GAD as men. People with GAD are also known to run a higher risk of developing depression or another anxiety disorder.

GAD can develop at any age, but the average is around 30 years. People diagnosed with GAS often say that they have been nervous and anxious all their lives. The diagnosis is rarely made at childhood age.

Symptoms

People meet the classification of GAD if they meet the following criteria:

- **Excessive fear and anxiety** about a number of events or activities, for at least six months
- The person finds it **difficult to control the anxiety**.
- The fear and anxiety are associated with three (or more) of the following symptoms:
 1. *Restlessness, tense feeling.*
 2. *Quickly/ frequently tired.*
 3. *Difficulty concentrating.*
 4. *Irritability/irritation.*
 5. *Muscle tension.*
 6. *Having trouble sleeping.*
- The fear and anxiety are so bad that people **suffer**, and that people cannot **function** properly anymore.

In summary, people with GAD excessively worry about normal things in daily life. This manifests itself in a lot of **worrying**: they endlessly think about certain problems.

People with GAD

Everyone worries about things once in a while. This is quite normal. It is only considered GAD when this worry is **exaggerated** and **always present**. People with GAD worry faster, about more things, and the worry also is bigger and worse. People with GAD can worry about things like responsibilities, work, finances, that something serious happens to the children, but also about small things like household chores or arriving on time for an appointment.

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