

## **Anxiety**

People with an anxiety disorder may have a number of physical symptoms, including shakiness, muscle aches, sweating, cold and clammy hands, dizziness, fatigue, racing heart and dry mouth. Emotionally they may feel irritable and apprehensive, fearing that bad things are about to happen to themselves or to their loved ones. Anxiety can be broken down into several types.

## **Panic Disorder**

People with Panic Disorder suffer sudden intense overwhelming terror for no apparent reason. Their fear is accompanied by other symptoms, including sweating, heart palpitations, hot or cold flashes, choking or smothering and feelings of unreality.

## **Phobia**

This term describes the kind of terror, dread or panic that overwhelms anxiety sufferers when they are faced with a feared object, situation or activity. Many common phobias are familiar to us: fear of snakes, enclosed spaces, airplanes are just a few. Agoraphobia, the fear of being in a public space with no escape, like a bus or a crowded store, can leave the person housebound.

## **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder**

For people with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, obsessions are a way of coping with their anxieties: repeated, unwanted thoughts or compulsive behaviours, rituals that get out of control. A person may deal with, for example, unwanted sexual thoughts, by cleaning themselves so compulsively their hands bleed.

## **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**

This can affect anyone who has survived a severe and unusual physical or mental trauma. Witnesses to a violent auto accident or survivors of a life-threatening crime may develop this illness, which tends to be more severe the less it is expected. Some victims find themselves re-experiencing the traumatic events through nightmares, night terrors or flashbacks. Others numb themselves emotionally, startle easily, are plagued by general anxiety, inability to sleep, poor memory difficulty concentrating or completing tasks, and feel guilty about their own survival.

## **Depression**

One in four women and one in ten men can expect to be diagnosed with depression at some point in their lives, though very often it goes unrecognized.

Signs to look for are continuing feelings of sadness, of helplessness, hopelessness and irritability, and the inability to keep up with the basic parts of life. Other symptoms include: a noticeable change of appetite that brings about a significant gain or loss of weight, problems sleeping or waking, sudden loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed, an inability to concentrate and make decisions, fatigue, feelings of worthlessness and guilt, headache and stomachache.

## **Depression, Cont.**

People experiencing depression may have thoughts of suicide. Many doctors believe, in fact, that depression is the illness that underlies the majority of suicides in Canada. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death among people between the ages of 15 to 24. When depression is experienced later in life the symptoms of depression - including memory impairment, slowed speech and movement - can be mistaken for those of senility or stroke.

Depression can strike at any age. Its emotional and physical symptoms are notable for their persistence.

## **Manic Depression**

Manic depression is a treatable illness which is found in about one percent of the population. It often first occurs in the late teens or early '20s. People with manic depression experience periods of depression as described earlier, as well as periods of mania. During an episode of mania, a person may have some or all of the following symptoms: excessive energy, racing flights of ideas, vigorous denial that anything is wrong, pressured speech, grandiose thoughts or inflated self-esteem, overspending, high heart rate and irregular breathing, alternating decreases and increases of sleep, impaired judgement, extreme irritability or rapid, unpredictable mood changes.