

Panic and Anxiety Disorder

People at times say that panic attacks and anxiety attacks are one in the same, and that is incorrect. Panic attacks come on suddenly and involve intense and often overwhelming fear. It's accompanied by frightening physical symptoms such as a racing heartbeat shortness and breath or nausea.

Unexpected panic attacks occur without an obvious cause. Expected panic attacks are queued by external stressors and can happen to anyone. Having more than one attack is considered to be a sign of a panic disorder.

Anxiety is a common psychiatric disorder. Symptoms of anxiety include worry, distress and fear. Anxiety is usually related to the anticipation of a stressful situation, experience or event. It may come gradually. The lack of defining and realizing these attacks means that the signs and symptoms are open for interpretation. By reading and finding out more about the differences between panic attacks and anxiety attacks one will better understand these disorders and how to handle them.

Panic and anxiety attacks may feel similar, and they share a lot of emotional and physical symptoms. You can experience both anxiety and a panic attack at the same time. For instance, you might experience anxiety while worrying about a potentially stressful situation, one example, the work place. When the situation arrives, anxiety may culminate in a panic attack. It may be difficult to know whether what you're experiencing is anxiety or a panic attack. Keep in mind the following... Anxiety is typically related to something that's perceived as stressful or threatening. Panic attacks aren't always defined as stressors. They mostly occur out of the blue. Anxiety can be mild, moderate or severe. For example, anxiety may be happening in the back of your mind as you go about your day to day activities. Panic attacks on the other hand mostly involve severe, distributive symptoms, and physical symptoms are often more intense than symptoms of anxiety. While anxiety can build gradually, panic attacks usually come on abruptly. Panic attacks typically trigger worries or fears related to having another attack. This may have an effect on your behavior, leading you to avoid a place or situation where you think you might be at risk of a panic attack.

Unexpected panic attacks have no clear external triggers. Expected panic attacks and anxiety can be triggered by similar things. Some common triggers include, a stressful job, driving, social situations, fear of being in a crowded area with people, reminders or memories of traumatic experiences, chronic illnesses, withdrawal from drugs or alcohol, caffeine, medications, etc.

Anxiety and panic attacks have similar risk factors. These include trauma (witnessing a traumatic event), death of a loved one, worrying about anything and everything. When reading this article, you may be thinking, "Do I have both of these disorders?" Reason being, in researching these two disorders, I was asking myself the same question. Please don't diagnose yourself, for most of us who have a mental disorder, inherently, from time to time, have a panic or anxiety episode.

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