

HOW IS PANIC DISORDER DIFFERENT FROM A PANIC ATTACK



Every one of us has been overwhelmed with feelings of fear and anxiousness at some point in our life - before an important examination, awaiting diagnostic results, going through a breakup/divorce, watching disturbing news, etc. Such reactions and responses are called Panic Attacks.

Common symptoms associated with a Panic Attack include palpitations, shortness of breath, feeling of choking, sweating and chills, chest pain, fear of dying.

While mild Panic Attacks in stressful situations are quite the norm, few experience intense Panic Attacks, sometimes in anticipation of another one or recalling a previous episode. Such people are said to have Panic Disorder and need professional help to manage their well-being. For people with Panic Disorder, the Panic Attacks often come without warning and last for about 10-15 mins. Some individuals have panic attacks that last up to an hour or more.

The disorder usually manifests as,

Anticipatory Anxiety :

- When the individual starts to have panic attacks pre-empting another one
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Phobic Avoidance :

- The person avoids all situations and places that was the scene of their trauma and continues to stay away from them

CAUSE AND RISK FACTORS:

Panic disorder usually cannot be pinpointed to a single cause. Most afflicted individuals start to show signs and symptoms in their teenage years or as young adults. One in 10 adults in the U.S. has a panic attack each year. About a third of people have one in their lifetime. But most of them don't have panic disorder. Only about 3% of adults have it. It is more common among women.

Some of the factors that act as a precursor to the disorder include:

- Traumatic incidents - accident, assault, abuse.
 - Stressful situations - examinations, awaiting results.
 - Major changes, events in life - relocation, career change.
 - Family History and Genetics.
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MANAGING PANIC DISORDERS:

A combination of therapy, medications, and lifestyle changes help in coping with Panic Disorder. Psychotherapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is the most commonly prescribed treatment methods. Lifestyle changes include co-opting a healthy routine, getting adequate sleep and physical activity, cutting down on caffeine, cigarettes, alcohol.



Read more about **PANIC DISORDER** and other mental health related articles on www.pamllc.us/resources

Interested in a consultation? Request an appointment from our [website](#) or mail at telehealth@pamllc.us

NOTE

If you are in immediate distress or are thinking about hurting yourself, call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline toll-free at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or the toll-free TTY number at 1-800-799-4TTY(4889). You also can text the Crisis Text Line (HELLO to 741741) or go to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline website at <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>



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