



## Test How Much You Know About Anxiety Disorders

Fear and anxiety are a necessary part of life. Whether it's a feeling of anxiety before taking a test or a feeling of fear as you walk down a dark street, normal anxiety can be protective and stimulating. Unfortunately, more than 19 million Americans with anxiety disorders face much more than just "normal" anxiety. Instead, their lives are filled with overwhelming anxiety and fear that can be intense and crippling. Although anxiety disorders can be disabling, research supported and conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has provided insight into their causes and has resulted in many effective treatments.

### 1. Which of the following are disorders of the brain?

- a. Stroke, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis
- b. Anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, depression, alcohol addiction
- c. Autism, anorexia, learning disabilities, dyslexia, migraines
- d. Alzheimer's, Tourette syndrome, Parkinson's, brain tumor
- e. All of the above

### 2. True or False? Post-Traumatic stress disorder, once referred to as shell shock or battle fatigue, is a condition that only affects war veterans.

- True     False

### 3. True or False? Someone who feels compelled to spend a great deal of time doing things over and over again such as washing their hands, checking things, or counting things has an anxiety disorder.

- True     False

### 4. What is the most common mental health problem in the United States?

- a. Depression
- b. Schizophrenia
- c. Anxiety disorders

### 5. Which of the following diseases/disorders are real medical illnesses?

- a. Anxiety disorders
- b. Diabetes
- c. High blood pressure
- d. All of the above

### 6. Which of the following are symptoms of an anxiety disorder known as panic disorder?

- a. Chest pains
- b. Dizziness
- c. Nausea or stomach problems
- d. Fear of dying
- e. All of the above

### 7. True or False? Anxiety disorders often occur with other illnesses.

- True     False

### 8. True or False? Most people successfully take control of the symptoms of anxiety disorders by sheer willpower and personal strength.

- True     False

Wellness

1. Which of the following are disorders of the brain?

Answer: **e. All of the above.**

Brain research demonstrates that disorders as different as stroke, anxiety disorders, alcohol addiction, anorexia, learning disabilities, and Alzheimer's all have their roots in the brain. Every American will be affected at some point in his or her life, either personally or by a family member's struggle, with a brain disorder.

2. Post-traumatic stress disorder, once referred to as shell shock or battle fatigue, is a condition that only affects war veterans. Answer: **False.**

Individuals who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event or ordeal, such as a terrorist attack, a tornado, a rape or mugging, or a car accident, can be at risk for developing posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Many people with this anxiety disorder repeatedly relive the trauma in the form of nightmares and disturbing recollections during the day. They may also experience sleep problems, depression, feeling detached or numb, or being easily startled.

3. Someone who feels compelled to spend a great deal of time doing things over and over again such as washing their hands, checking things, or counting things has an anxiety disorder. Answer: **True.**

A person plagued by the urgent need to engage in certain rituals, or tormented by unwelcome thoughts or images, may be suffering from an anxiety disorder called obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Most healthy people can identify with having some of the symptoms of OCD, such as checking the stove several times before leaving the house. But the disorder is diagnosed only when such activities consume at least an hour a day, are very distressing, and interfere with daily life. OCD affects men and women equally. It can appear in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood, but on the average, it first shows up in the teens or early adulthood.

4. What is the most common mental health problem in the United States? Answer: **c. Anxiety Disorders.**

Anxiety disorders are the most common mental health problem in America. More than 19 million Americans suffer from anxiety disorders, which include panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, phobias, and generalized anxiety disorders.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health

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5. Which of the following diseases/disorders are real medical illnesses? Answer: **d. All of the above.**

Anxiety disorders, diabetes, and high blood pressure are all real medical illnesses. Brain scientists have shown that anxiety disorders are often related to the biological makeup and life experiences of the individual, and they frequently run in families. Unfortunately, misconceptions about mental illnesses like anxiety disorders still exist. Because many people believe mental illness is a sign of personal weakness, the condition is often trivialized and is left untreated. The good news is that effective treatments are available for anxiety disorders.

6. Which of the following are symptoms of an anxiety disorder known as panic disorder? Answer: **e. All of the above.**

Panic disorder is characterized by unexpected and repeated episodes of intense fear accompanied by physical symptoms that may include chest pain, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness, or abdominal distress. These sensations often mimic symptoms of a heart attack or other lifethreatening medical conditions. Left untreated, people with panic disorder can develop so many phobias about places or situations where panic attacks have occurred that they become housebound.

7. Anxiety disorders often occur with other illnesses. Answer: **True.**

It is common for an anxiety disorder to accompany depression, eating disorders, substance abuse, or another anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders can also co-exist with illnesses such as heart disease, high blood pressure, irritable bowel syndrome, thyroid conditions, and migraine headaches. In such instances, the accompanying disorders will also need to be treated. So, it is important, before beginning any treatment, to have a thorough medical examination to determine the causes of symptoms.

8. Most people successfully take control of the symptoms of anxiety disorders by sheer willpower and personal strength. Answer: **False.**

Many people misunderstand anxiety disorders and other mental illnesses and think individuals should be able to overcome the symptoms by sheer willpower. Wishing the symptoms away does not work—but there are treatments that can help. Treatment for anxiety disorders often involves medication, specific forms of psychotherapy, or a combination of the two.