

# ANXIETY DISEASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

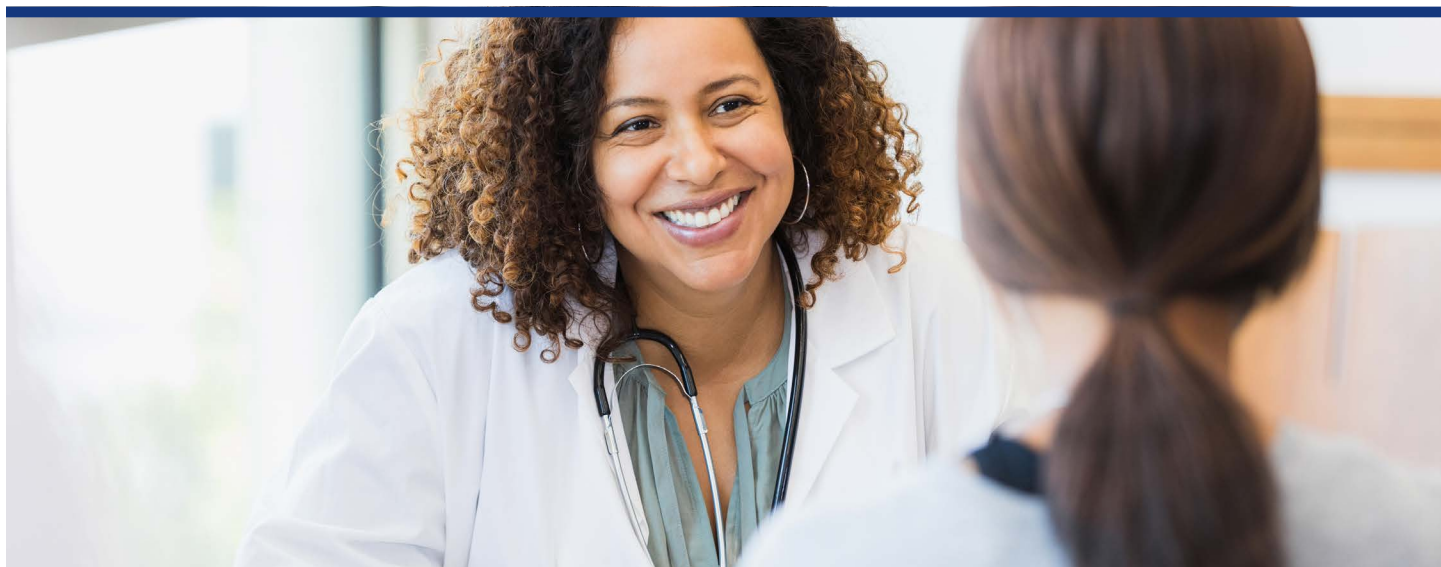
## Welcome to Better Health

Humana Military offers disease management programs to assist beneficiaries with managing chronic diseases to improve their health. Our team partners with beneficiaries and their clinicians to identify problems, establish goals and monitor progress through regular follow-up care.

We are excited to welcome you to our anxiety disease management program. The program is offered to you at no cost and participation is not required.

This booklet provides you with some information about anxiety and can help with understanding your condition and identifying and managing your symptoms.

Please visit our website at [HumanaMilitary.com/DM](https://HumanaMilitary.com/DM) or call (800) 881-9227 for more information about anxiety and our disease management initiative.



EAST REGION

[HumanaMilitary.com](https://HumanaMilitary.com)

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# Management Begins with Awareness

Anxiety disorders involve more than temporary worry or fear. If you are one of the 40 million American adults who suffer with an anxiety disorder, know that constant and unresolved anxiety is a serious medical condition, and like many other health problems, anxiety can get worse if it is ignored.

Good management and active involvement in your healthcare decisions are key to controlling anxiety and living a healthy and active life.

## Commonly Asked Questions and Answers

### WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety is a basic emotion that helps us prepare and respond to life's challenges.

Anxiety occurs when facing important life events like having a child, buying a house or managing a deployment, or certain uncomfortable encounters such as spiders, heights or public speaking. However, for people who suffer from anxiety, the constant fear and worry can be overwhelming as the distress prevents you from carrying on with your life normally.



There are several different anxiety-related conditions. Generally, all anxiety-related disorders feature worry, nervousness or fear that is ongoing, excessive and has negative effects on a person's ability to function.

Anxiety-Related Condition	Description
<b>Separation Anxiety</b>	Extreme fear or anxiety related to being separated from caregivers or attachment figures. People are often familiar with the idea of separation anxiety as it relates to young children's fear of being apart from their parents, but older children and adults can experience it as well.
<b>Phobias</b>	Extreme fear of a specific object or situation in the environment, like spiders, small spaces, heights or snakes. When confronted by a phobic object or situation, people may experience nausea, trembling, rapid heart rate and even a fear of dying.
<b>Panic Attacks</b>	Frequent attacks of intense fear, anxiety or discomfort that often seem to strike out of the blue and may be difficult to control. People with recurrent panic may avoid social situation or going out in public altogether to avoid a potentially embarrassing attack.
<b>Agoraphobia</b>	Intense fear of a wide range of public places. People who experience this disorder often fear that they will suffer a panic attack in a setting where escape might be difficult. Because of this fear, those with agoraphobia often avoid situations that might trigger an anxiety attack.
<b>Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)</b>	Excessive worry about a wide variety of things that occurs on most days and interferes with well-being and functioning.

## WHAT CAUSES ANXIETY?

The exact causes of anxiety are unknown. Experts believe that a combination of genetic and environmental factors play a role:

- Stress: excessive or unresolved stress can increase your chances.
- Genetics: if someone in your family has an anxiety disorder, you have a greater risk of developing one too. Your risk is especially high if you have a parent with anxiety.
- Trauma: severe trauma, like child abuse or military combat, increases your risk.
- Attitudes and beliefs: how you feel about the world and yourself can cause anxiety.
- Other conditions or medical illnesses: anxiety could come from thyroid problems, asthma, depression or other health issues.
- Alcohol and other substances (like drugs): using or withdrawing from these substances can add to anxiety.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY?

Usually, symptoms of anxiety include some (or all) of the following:

- Fear
- Worry
- Avoidance
- Restlessness
- Fatigue
- Feeling on edge
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sleep issues
- Tense muscles
- Irritability

Anxiety becomes a problem, and should be considered a disorder, when it keeps you from being successful in your work, enjoying time with family and friends or affecting other areas of your life that are important to you.

## HOW IS ANXIETY DIAGNOSED?

Your doctor or behavioral health professional should use a variety of methods to diagnosis anxiety including:

- A physical exam to look for signs that your anxiety might be linked to medications or an underlying medical condition.
- Order blood or urine tests or other tests, if a medical condition is suspected.
- Ask detailed questions about your symptoms and medical history.
- Use psychological questionnaires to help determine a diagnosis.
- Use the criteria listed in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)*, published by the American Psychiatric Association.

## WHAT MEDICATIONS ARE USED TO TREAT ANXIETY?

Several types of medications are used to treat anxiety disorders. The medication and most effective dosage vary from person to person. It may take time to find the right medication for you. Talk with your doctor about benefits, risks and possible side effects.

Four major classes of medications are used in the treatment of anxiety disorders:

- Benzodiazepines
- Tricyclic antidepressants
- Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRI)
- Buspirone



## HOW CAN THERAPY HELP WITH ANXIETY?

Depending on the type of anxiety you have and your symptoms, your doctor may refer you to a therapist. Together, you will both decide on the best treatment for your condition.

There are two main types of psychotherapy for anxiety disorders:

**Cognitive therapy:** helps you recognize negative or irrational thoughts that play a role in anxiety disorders. You can then learn how to see these thoughts for what they are and replace them with rational thoughts.

**Behavioral therapy:** is based on the idea that certain behaviors are learned, such as avoiding social situations. This therapy believes that what has been learned can be “unlearned”, and that you can find new ways to handle anxiety, such as:

- Practicing to calm yourself
- Distracting yourself with a learned activity

## WHAT ARE IRRATIONAL THOUGHTS?

Negative thinking is the cornerstone of an anxiety disorder. Many people with anxiety have severe problems with irrational thinking - thoughts that you know are not true, yet you have a hard time letting go of them. Irrational thoughts can have a drastic impact on your overall quality of life. Recognizing irrational thinking is the first step in learning to control it.

Thought records are used to help you see the interactions between your thoughts, feelings and behaviors. It is a tool you to record your experiences and a great place to begin challenging irrational thoughts.

An important part of both cognitive and behavioral therapies is recognizing when troubling thoughts are actually irrational or based on false beliefs. Once accepted, you can learn to replace those thoughts with ones that are more realistic and positive.



<b>Situation</b>	Describe the situation – what happened? Where were you, what were you doing? Who was involved?
<b>Automatic Thoughts</b>	Which thoughts/images came to mind in that situation?
<b>Emotions</b>	Which thoughts/images came to mind in that situation?
<b>Behaviors</b>	What did you do?
<b>Alternative Thoughts</b>	Are there other explanations for the event or alternative ways of seeing the situation? What is the evidence that the automatic thoughts are true? What is the evidence these thoughts are not true?



## Healthy Lifestyle Recommendations



You can help control your anxiety by adopting healthy lifestyle habits. Here is a list of suggestions to help you get started.

### 1. **Schedule and keep regular appointments with your doctor:**

Other diseases (known as comorbidities) may play a role in your anxiety's progression. It is important for you to tell your doctor if you are being seen by other physicians for other health reasons.

### 2. **Follow the guidance and/or treatment plan given by your doctor:**

This includes taking prescription medication(s) as directed.

### 3. **Rest frequently and get enough sleep:**

If you are well-rested, you will be better able to face the challenges of daily life and enjoy the rewards, too.

### 4. **Eat a balanced diet:**



Eat a variety of healthy foods every day. Try to stay away from foods and beverages with caffeine, as it can worsen your anxiety. Ask your doctor about the right foods to eat and which ones to avoid.

### 5. **Exercise regularly but stay within what your health condition allows:**



Talk to your doctor about the type of activities you can do. Many activities require little or no equipment. Brisk walking only requires a comfortable pair of walking shoes.

### 6. **Limit your alcohol:**



If you do drink, talk to your doctor about drinking in moderation. This means limiting alcohol consumption to one drink per day for women and two per day for men.

## 7. Do not use illegal drugs:

Illegal drug use should be avoided as they can damage your health, increase your anxiety, and put you in legal trouble.

## 8. Manage stress in your life:



Find ways to reduce stress to help relieve some of the anxiety you feel. It can help you feel more in control and more positive about yourself as a result. To reduce stress, it may help to:

- Pace yourself. Don't try take on too many things at once.
- Plan your time. A schedule helps make your responsibilities and tasks easier to manage.
- Allow time for rest and recreation.
- Think about the things in life that cause stress for you. Think of positive ways you can deal with them.
- Plan ahead of time how you will handle stressful situations.
- Practice relaxation techniques every day.

## 9. Learn to relax:

Relaxation training plays an important part in therapy. It can help you stay in control relieve physical symptoms of depression.

Deep-breathing exercises. Doing these exercises every day can help prevent depression symptoms from building up.

Follow these steps:

- Sit comfortably or lie on your back.
- Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose for a count of five.
- Hold your breath for three to five seconds.
- Breathe out slowly through your mouth for a count of five.
- Repeat several times until you feel calm and relaxed.

Meditation. This can help calm you and clear your mind of worries. Follow these steps:

- Wear comfortable clothing. Find a quiet place. Sit or lie down.
- Close your eyes.
- Concentrate on a single word, object or calming thought, such as the word "calm" or "peace."
- Don't worry if other thoughts or images pop into your mind while you are doing this. Just relax and return to what you were focusing on.
- Continue until you feel relaxed and refreshed.

Other relaxation techniques:

- Visualization: you imagine a pleasant, peaceful scene (a deserted beach, for example) and focus on it for a set amount of time.
- Guided imagery: you are guided through a series of exercises in which you visualize peaceful scenes.
- Biofeedback: special devices help you learn how to relax your body.
- Listening to quiet, relaxing music or relaxation tapes.

## 10. Try to keep a positive attitude:



You can learn to feel better about yourself and more in control of your life. A "can-do" attitude can make a difference when it comes to treating anxiety.

- Build your self-esteem. Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself. Improving your self-esteem can be a big help in reducing your anxiety.
- Go easy on yourself. Remember, millions of people have anxiety disorders, but treatment can make you feel better!

