



## GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDERS & ITS HOMOEOPATHIC APPROACH

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**ABSTRACT** Anxiety is a psychological and physiological state characterized by cognitive, somatic, emotional, and behavioral components. These components combine to create an unpleasant feeling that is typically associated with uneasiness, apprehension, fear, or worry. Anxiety is a generalized mood condition that can often occur without an identifiable triggering stimulus. Homoeopathy can be proved an effective method of treatment in generalized anxiety disorders as it emphasizes not only treating signs and symptoms but also treating the patient on the holistic basis. So not only it reduces the anxiety but also make the individual to feel better in other areas of functioning.

**KEYWORDS :** GAD, constitutional medicine, mental diseases, miasms.

### INTRODUCTION

Anxiety is an alerting signal; it warns the impending danger and enables the person to take measures to deal with a threat. A subjective feeling of as primary or the only symptom not justified as a response to real life stressors is pathological. As an isolated feature of anxiety disorder, it differs from normal anxiety and that of adjustment reactions. Normal anxiety is a response to an identifiable danger or threat to ones safety and security and recedes when it passes. Real anxiety which is endogenous is “ego alien” and “ego dystonic”.

### Generalized Anxiety Disorder



Persons who seem to be anxious about almost everything, however, are likely to be classified as having generalized anxiety disorder. Generalized anxiety disorder is a common condition; reasonable estimates for its 1-year prevalence range from 3 to 8 percent.

### DSM-V- Diagnostic Criteria for Generalized Anxiety Disorder

A. Excessive anxiety and worry (apprehensive expectation), occurring more days than not for at least 6 months, about a number of events or activities (such as work or school performance).

B. The individual finds it difficult to control the worry.

C. The anxiety and worry are associated with three (or more) of the following six symptoms (with at least some symptoms having been present for more days than not for the past 6 months): Note: Only one item required in children.

1. Restlessness, feeling keyed up or on edge.
2. Being easily fatigued.
3. Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank.
4. Irritability.
5. Muscle tension.
6. Sleep disturbance (difficulty falling or staying asleep, or restless, unsatisfying sleep).

D. The anxiety, worry, or physical symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

E. The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or another medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism).

F. The disturbance is not better explained by another medical disorder.

### Causes of GAD-

1. *Psychodynamic Theory-* According to this theory, anxiety is a signal that something is disturbing the internal psychological equilibrium. This is called as signal anxiety. This signal anxiety arouses the ego to take defensive action which is usually in the form of repression, a primary defense mechanism. Ordinarily when repression fails, other secondary defense mechanisms (such as conversion, isolation) are called into action. In anxiety, repression fails to function adequately but the secondary defense mechanisms are not activated. Hence, anxiety comes to the forefront unopposed.
2. *Behavioral Theory-* According to this theory, anxiety is viewed as an unconditioned inherent response of the organism to painful or dangerous stimuli. In anxiety and phobias, this becomes attached to relatively neutral stimuli by conditioning.
3. *Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT)* According to cognitive behavior theory, in anxiety disorders there is evidence of selective information processing (with more attention paid to threat-related information), cognitive distortions, negative automatic thoughts and perception of decreased control over both internal and external stimuli.
4. *Biological Theory*
  - i. *Genetic evidence:* About 15-20% of first degree relatives of the patients with anxiety disorder exhibit anxiety disorders themselves.
  - ii. *Biological Model:* Chemically induced anxiety states: Infusion of chemicals (such as sodium lactate, isoproterenol and caffeine), ingestion of yohimbine and inhalation of 5% CO<sub>2</sub> can produce panic episodes in predisposed individuals. Administration (oral) of MAOIs before the lactate infusion protects the individual(s) from panic attack, thus providing a probable clue to the biological model of anxiety.
  - iii. *GABA- benzodiazepine receptors:* This is one of the most recent advances in the search for the etiology of anxiety disorders. It has been suggested that an alteration in GABA levels may lead to production of clinical anxiety.

### Symptoms of GAD

Psychological	Physical	Behavioral
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chronic worry about events that are unlikely to occur</li> <li>• inability to shut off constant anxious thoughts</li> <li>• feelings of dread</li> <li>• restlessness and inability to relax</li> <li>• trouble falling asleep or staying asleep</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of energy</li> <li>• twitching or trembling</li> <li>• muscular tension, aches or soreness</li> <li>• stomach problems (nausea or diarrhea)</li> <li>• headaches</li> <li>• chest pains</li> <li>• grinding of teeth</li> <li>• dry mouth</li> <li>• sweating or hot flashes</li> <li>• dizziness or lightheadedness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• trouble concentrating</li> <li>• irritability</li> <li>• easy to startle</li> <li>• procrastination</li> </ul>

### Homoeopathic Approach

Homoeopathy deals with man. It is essentially and basically human

(humane) medicine. This demands that the physician be an integral cultured individual who has learnt, through his contact with patients, A homeopathic physician takes a total view of man, conceptualizing him as body, soul and spirit. Only when this is done, he can appreciate the real state of feeling of human being and perceive his authenticity. A deeper understanding of the psycho-spiritual and personality structure permits the derivation of the mental symptoms.

The homeopathic physician must pay great attention to treating patients at two levels. Not only is the diagnosis of the present similimum in accordance with the general and biographical symptoms important but a thorough comprehension of how he should treat the patient to aid him in assuming the responsibility for his essential development as a adult, by attaining a synthesis between his soul and his spirit. Homeopathy is a system of drug therapeutics based on law of similars. "Like cures like" 'Similia similibus curentur'. Law of similars is the fundamental law on which the system homeopathy rests. It is a universal law. A complete diagnosis offers a full comprehension of the patient personality his law, Constitution and the mechanism and production of symptoms. (Subjective and objective) the pathologic agent, the physiological disturbances induced the psychological, accompaniments and the pathogenesis. Homeopathic medicines are prescribed by totality of symptoms outwardly reflected picture of the internal essence of disease rather than conditions as each case of particular illness can manifest differently in different people.

### Treatment of GAD

#### Homeopathic Remedies used in the treatment of GAD

1. **Aconite**- A panic attack that comes on suddenly with very strong fear (even fear of death) may indicate this remedy. A state of immense anxiety may be accompanied by strong palpitations, shortness of breath, and flushing of the face.
2. **Argentum nitricum**- This remedy is indicated when anxiety develops before a big event. (Examples: an interview for job, an exam, a public speech, social engagement, marriage, etc.).
3. **Arsenicum album**- this remedy is recommended for people who are deeply anxious about their health, and extremely concerned with order and security. Panic attacks often occur around midnight or the very early hours of the morning. The person may feel exhausted yet still be restless-fidgeting, pacing, and anxiously moving from place to place.
4. **Gelsemium**- This remedy is indicated when you have feelings of weakness, trembling, and mental dullness (being "paralyzed by fear"). It is also useful when a person experiences anxiety about an upcoming event such as stage-fright about a public performance or interview, or anxiety before a test, impending visit to the dentist, or other stressful events. Chills, perspiration, diarrhea, and headaches will often occur with nervousness. Fear of crowds, a fear of falling, and even a fear that the heart might stop are other indications for Gelsemium.
5. **Lycopodium** - Lycopodium patients attempt to cover an inner sense of inadequacy by putting up fronts, by pretending to be something they are not. They feel anxiety from mental stress and suffer from a lack of confidence. They can be self-conscious and feel intimidated by people they perceive as powerful. They can feel a deep anxiety and fear of failure, when they take on responsibility. They usually do well, once started on a task.
6. **Phosphorus** - Indicated when the victims are openhearted, imaginative, excitable, easily startled, and full of intense and vivid fears. Strong anxiety can be easily triggered just by thinking of almost anything. They are nervous and sensitive to others. They can overextend themselves with sympathy to the point of feeling exhausted and "spaced out" or even getting ill. They need a lot of company and reassurance.

### Psychotherapy

2. **Cognitive Behavior Therapy** Cognitive therapy, most systematically developed by Beck, has proved to be a very fruitful way to understand and treat clinical disorders. Cognitive therapy is about to become a complete theory of psychotherapy.
3. **Self-Monitoring**– Self-monitoring techniques are usually employed early in the course of treatment to establish a baseline frequency of behaviors that are targeted for a change. Patients frequently observe that carefully tracking and recording of information about their behavior results in greater depth of awareness and understanding, and can lead to a significant decrease of maladaptive behavior.
4. **Lifestyle Modification & Relaxation Techniques**– Patients with clinical anxiety disorders often derive benefit from changes in

diet, exercise patterns, time management, and sleep hygiene. The elimination of caffeine and excessive alcohol use is highly recommended. Many patients report that skipping meals or eating "on the run" contributes to a sense of being rushed.

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