

Panic Disorder; Panic Attacks & Agoraphobia

What are Panic attacks/panic disorder

Panic disorder is identified by frequent panic attacks, which can vary from a few seconds to a few minutes, however occur as extremely scary and uncomfortable. Normally a person who suffers from a panic attack experiences intense feelings of terror and fear that suddenly happen and last only a few minutes. During a panic attack, people may fear they are having a heart attack, going crazy or have a feeling that they are dying. They describe an extremely fast or pounding heartbeat, chest pains, dizziness, light-headedness, queasiness feelings of smothering, breathlessness, tingling or numbness in the hands, hot flushes or chills, and a fear of being out of control. Panic attack sufferers are known to seek advice from different doctors and medical specialists, such as cardiologists, physicians, or neurologists, dreading that they suffer from a life-threatening disease. It is not uncommon for many years to pass by before an accurate diagnosis is made. Throughout this time sufferers tend to avoid situations or places (agoraphobia) where the initial attack(s) took place, as they are afraid of having another attack. This can be very unbearable and unnecessarily as it gives limits to their everyday life.

Can anyone get panic disorder?

The answer is yes, anyone may possibly suffer from panic disorder, no matter what gender, race, or socio-economic status. Studies have shown that approximately 2-4 in every 100 people will possibly suffer from panic disorder at some time in their lives, and the statistics for agoraphobia are even higher. Panic disorder usually begins between late adolescence and mid-thirties; however it is possible for children to also suffer from this disorder. The first attack often originates from a stressful life event such as the death of a close family member or friend, a loss of a close relationship or after a separation or sudden change in life style.

Ok, I think I suffer from Panic Disorder; Panic Attacks & Agoraphobia, what do I do now?

You firstly and most importantly need to contact a professional for an accurate diagnosis. Help is available and in most cases is effective in helping to dissolve symptoms.

Here at the Anxiety and Trauma Clinic we have experts who are waiting to assist you in the treatment. Call us for a booking or for any question which you may have. We're here to answer any question or concern that is on your mind. Call us on (011) 883-4552, or email us on info@atclinic.co.za