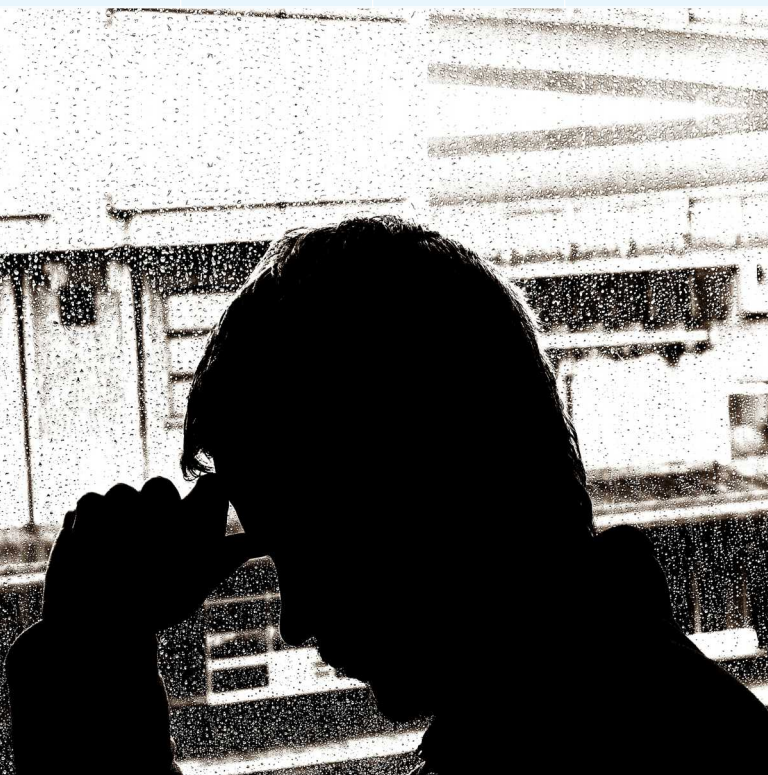


How to Prevent Anxiety in the Elderly



P. D. HINDUJA HOSPITAL
& MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE

What is anxiety?

Feeling anxious or nervous is a common emotion for people of all ages and is a normal reaction to stress. When one feels anxious often and the anxiety is overwhelming and affects daily tasks, social life and relationships, it may be an illness. An anxiety disorder causes feelings of fear, worry or apprehension that are excessive or disproportional to the problems or situations that are feared.

What are the causes of anxiety?

A number of things can contribute to an anxiety disorder like:-

- Extreme stress or trauma
- Bereavement and grief
- Alcohol, caffeine, drugs (prescription, over - the -counter and illegal)
- A family history of anxiety disorders
- Other medical / mental illnesses or neurological illness, poor health, memory problems and losses

What are the symptoms of anxiety?

- Palpitations, trembling, dizziness, muscle tension, nausea, shallow breathing, sweating, lack of appetite, insomnia, chest pain
- Anxious thoughts, irritability, helplessness, guilt, panic, excessive worry or fear
- Over alertness / hypersensitivity, confusion, difficulty in objective thinking and in concentrating
- Restlessness, avoidance behavior, using unhealthy stress relieving methods like smoking and drinking

How is anxiety treated?

Anxiety is treated through anti - anxiety medications, psychotherapy, stress reduction, coping skills and family / social support.

How to prevent anxiety?

Here are a few tips to prevent anxiety:-

1. Be optimistic, think positive, avoid being too subjective, try to stay calm, see things realistically and don't magnify problems. Keep a positive attitude and emphasize on your abilities and strengths.
2. Accept that life is not perfect. Never set unrealistic goals for yourself. Do not demand excessively from others.
3. Hold on to the present and treasure what you possess.
4. Manage your problem, handle it positively and directly and talk to others, i.e. try to communicate openly with the person concerned and discuss to find a solution to the problem.
5. Share your feelings with family, friends or your spiritual leader.
6. Practice a healthy lifestyle, learn relaxation skills, arrange health assessment regularly. A balanced diet, adequate sleep, regular exercise, cultivation of interests help to fight anxiety. Choose appropriate methods for relaxation, like meditation, prayer, listening to music, deep breathing from the lower abdomen and reading - all help to ease your mind.

7. Seek professional help from a Psychologist immediately, if anxiety persists.
8. Acknowledge worries and address any fears that can be handled.
9. Avoid excessive tea, coffee, soda, chocolate, smoking, overeating, over - the - counter medicines, illegal drugs and alcohol.
10. Limit the negative news of current events, which can contribute to anxiety.
11. Ensure a nutrient - rich balanced diet.
12. Engage in social activities like joining a Senior Citizens' Club, and find an activity partner to accompany on walks or volunteer at a library or school for social interaction and a sense of purpose.

To know more about How to Prevent Anxiety in the elderly contact Geriatric Clinic

The Geriatric Clinic is located at
**3rd floor, Health Check Department,
Hinduja Clinic Building**

Timing - **Thursday - 9.30 am to 11.30 am**

To schedule an appointment call

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