

## Sources of Anxiety and Stress

### Uncertainty

- About the future
- Job change
- Starting or ending relationships
- About identity

### Disconnection

- Social isolation
- Geographic distance from loved ones
- Religious or spiritual

### Trauma or Loss

- Death of a loved one
- Natural disasters
- Victim of a crime
- Abuse or assault

### Competence

- Academic
- Family or cultural
- Job-related
- Can I do this?

### Interpersonal

- Are they judging me?
- Will they like me?
- Are they disappointed, hurt, or angry with me?

## Types of Anxiety

### Panic Attack

- An acute episode of fear that seems to occur without a cause. Symptoms can include dizziness, racing heart, or sweating.

### Agoraphobia

- Anxiety about places from which escape might be difficult or embarrassing if you suddenly have a panic attack.

### Social Phobia

- Fear of humiliation where you are exposed to scrutiny. Typically there is concern about being judged as weak or stupid.

## Specific Phobia

- A strong fear or avoidance of an object or situation. Example: Animal phobia, fear of heights, or airplane phobia.

## Generalized Anxiety Disorder

- Chronic anxiety that involves worrying about several stressful life circumstances.

## Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

- A need to repeat behaviors or rituals to dispel anxiety caused by recurring thoughts, images, or impulses.

## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

- Chronic anxiety, nightmares, and flashbacks after a severe trauma such as war, assault, or a car accident.

## Signs of Stress

### Physical Symptoms

- Headaches, migraines, high blood pressure
- Muscle tension
- Sleep/eating (too little or too much)

### Feelings

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Anger

### Actions

- Increased use of alcohol and smoking
- Withdrawing, less productivity/satisfaction
- Family members stressed

### Thoughts

- My life is over
- Nothing is going to ever work out
- I am going to flunk out of school

## Tips for Lowering Stress and Anxiety

### Pleasurable Activities

- Listen to music
- Exercise
- Read
- Do things with people you like

## Take Care of Your Body

- Avoid too much caffeine or alcohol
- Eat healthy food
- Get enough sleep
- Exercise

## Time Management

- Prioritize
- Don't take on too much
- Know your limits

## Maintain Perspective

- Examine your thoughts for unhelpful/incorrect thoughts
- Then substitute with correct/helpful ones

## Communication Skills: Getting Along with Others

- Listen more
- Don't be passive
- Don't be aggressive
- Be assertive

## Laugh

- Watch funny movies or TV
- Look at the lighter side of life
- Have fun
- Play

## Relaxation

- Yoga
- Imagine pleasant scenes
- Listen to music
- Read
- Meditate

## Talk to Others

- Talk to friends, family
- UHCL Counseling Services
  - 281-283-2580
  - [www.uhcl.edu/counselingservices](http://www.uhcl.edu/counselingservices)

## Health Conditions that Can Contribute to Anxiety and Stress

### Thyroid Imbalance

- The thyroid helps regulate body temperature and metabolic rate. An overly active thyroid gland may increase anxiety.

### Candidiasis or “yeast syndrome”

- Too much yeast in the intestinal or genitourinary tract, may produce anxiety symptoms.

### Insomnia

- Lack of sleep is the most common factor that increases anxiety. Most need 7 to 8 hours of sleep/night.

### Premenstrual Syndrome

- Women may experience an increase in anxiety and panic reactions prior to menstruation.

### Body Toxicity

- Consuming pesticides in food, ingesting chemicals, and exposure to pollutants can increase anxiety.

### Adrenal Exhaustion

- Chronic stress can tax the adrenal system making it harder for your body to regulate emotions.