

# Phobias

Anxiety disorders




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## Class Objectives

- What is a *Phobia*?
- How are *Phobias* diagnosed?
- Causes and treatments for *phobias*




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## What is a phobia?

- A *specific phobia* is \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 - Such as heights or spiders.
- These fears significantly interferes with ones ability to function.
- It is very important to keep in mind, that phobias are not \_\_\_\_\_




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## RUN!!!

■ Avoidance of the stimuli is necessary to meet the criteria for a phobia.

■ Most persons with specific phobias recognize that the fears are \_\_\_\_\_




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## Diagnosing Phobias

■ To qualify for a diagnosis of phobic disorders is that the fear must \_\_\_\_\_

■ Unlike generalized anxiety, the anxiety is focused on some specific object or situation.

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## Phobic Disorders

■ The relief brought about by the avoidance or escape may help maintain the phobia.

- People with phobias often adapt their lives and simply work around it.

■ The lifetime prevalence of phobia is \_\_\_\_\_

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The physical symptoms of this type of anxiety are:



- Irregular breathing patterns
- Thoughts of disaster

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What did you see?

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Different types of phobias

DSM IV first defined phobias as a classifiable disorder in 1994 and \_\_\_\_\_ distinct types of phobias.

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## Types of phobias

Unreasonable fear/avoidance of exposure to blood, injury or possibility of an injection. \_\_\_\_\_

People with this type of phobia experience different physiological reactions than other phobias. \_\_\_\_\_




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## Blood-Injury-Injection Phobias

This type of phobia runs in families and has a \_\_\_\_\_

This is likely because people who inherit this phobia inherit a \_\_\_\_\_

The average age of onset for this type of phobia is 9. \_\_\_\_\_




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Natural/environment phobias  
involve the fear of events in \_\_\_\_\_

These types of phobias have the highest lifetime prevalence rates \_\_\_\_\_




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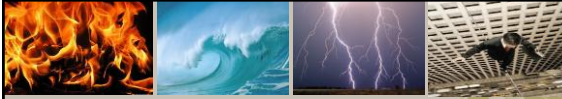
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These fears seem to cluster together, so if you fear one situation, you are likely to fear another.

- Example- If you fear deep water, you are likely to also fear storms

The age of onset for this type of phobia is age 7.

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Phobias characterized by fear of public transportation or enclosed places are called \_\_\_\_\_

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### Situational phobia



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People with situational phobias \_\_\_\_\_  
of their phobic object/situation.

- They are able to relax when they don't have to confront the phobia.

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Animal phobias are \_\_\_\_\_ phobia in the general population

- Animal phobia ranges from \_\_\_\_\_
- Fear of animals, particularly dogs, snakes, insects and mice are most commonly reported
- \_\_\_\_\_

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### Statistics

■ The APA reports that in any given year, 7.8% of American adults have phobias.

■ \_\_\_\_\_ and the second most common illness in men older than 25 (APA, 2005).

■ The sex ratio for specific phobias is 4:1, overwhelmingly female, which is consistent throughout the world (Arrindell et al., 2003).

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Since people tend to work around their phobias, only the most severe cases tend to seek treatment.

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## Will I have to live with this forever?

- Once a phobia develops, it tends to be

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- With proper treatment, the vast majority of phobia patients can completely overcome fears and live symptom-free.

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## Treatment




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- It is crucial that patients are not exposed to too much at once, which could lead to escape and this would only strengthen the phobia.

- New developments in treatment make it possible to treat many specific phobias in an intensive, one day session participating in exposure exercises with the phobia/situation (Anthony et al., 1997).

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## Treatments

- The results are very interesting because in these cases not only does the phobia disappear but the tendency to

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- It is now clear, based on brain imaging that these treatments change brain

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## Virtual Reality Therapy



Virtual reality therapy is becoming a more popular method of treatment which allows clients to confront anxiety-provoking events through a digital environment.

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## Where do phobias come from?

It was once believed that phobias developed after a traumatic event.




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## Where did this come from?

■ Traumatic experiences can result in phobic behavior, developed by

### - Example

Many people who have choking phobias have experienced choking at some time. This is one way to develop a phobia.

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## Developing phobias

### ■ Vicarious experience -

- Seeing someone else have a traumatic experience is enough to instill a phobia in the watcher. Research examining dental phobia (Ost, 1985) supports this.

3. Being warned repeatedly about danger can sometimes produce a phobia, this is referred to as \_\_\_\_\_




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## It's all in the breeding...

- Research suggests a strong genetic component to phobias.

- 31% of first-degree relatives of people with specific phobias also had a phobia, compared to only 11% of first relatives of normal controls.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_




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## Is this a learned behavior?

- The fear component of phobia is believed to be acquired through \_\_\_\_\_

- A child who is frightened by a barking dog
- A child who receives a painful injection

- Evidence shows that many cases of acrophobia, claustrophobia, and blood-injection phobias involve earlier pairings of the phobic object with aversive experiences (Merckelbach et al., 1996).




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## What's Next?

 (PTSD)-Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

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