Symptoms of Social Anxiety Disorder

by Amy Scholten, MPH

En Español (Spanish Version)

If you have social anxiety disorder, you may have the following symptoms during social interactions:

- Blushing
- Excessive sweating
- Trembling
- Dry throat and mouth
- Muscle twitches
- Intense anxiety
- Dizziness
- Rapid heart beat

These visible symptoms can heighten the fear of disapproval and the symptoms themselves can become an additional focus of fear. Fear of symptoms can create a vicious cycle: you may worry about having these symptoms, which makes you more likely to actually experience them.

Any public situation, familiar or unfamiliar, formal or informal, can lead to symptoms of social anxiety disorder. Common examples include:

- Being teased or criticized
- Being the center of attention
- Meeting new people
- Interacting with authority figures
- Interacting with members of the opposite sex
- Eating, writing, or speaking in public
- Using public toilets

Social anxiety disorder can be broken into two categories. The specific or performance type is limited to only one type of situation—such as a fear of speaking in formal or informal situations, or eating or drinking in front of others. With the most severe form (the generalized type of social anxiety disorder), you may experience symptoms almost anytime you are around other people.

REFERENCES:


