
The Treatments and Conditions of Social Anxiety

Social Anxiety

Social anxiety is also known as social phobia. Social anxiety disorder is the most common anxiety disorder, affecting over 10 million Americans. This disorder can develop as early in childhood, mid-teens, or even in adulthood. Social anxiety can be inherited usually through family history. Social anxiety has many treatments and conditions, has many effects on people, and can be a different lifestyle for people with this disorder.

Treatments and conditions for social anxiety can vary depending on what doctors recommend. These different treatments take time in order for the disorder to become controlled. The Mayo Clinic Staff strongly recommends, "To make the most of treatment, keep your medical or therapy appointments, take medications as directed, and talk to your doctor about any changes in your conditions" (Mayo Clinic Staff). An individual should not give up so easily if medications do not work fast, they can take over months at least for the medication to start working. Doctors recommend two main treatments to patients with social anxiety, which include therapy or medications. "Treatments include supportive therapy and medicine (most commonly the SSRI class of antidepressants)" (Donnica Moore, M.D.). Antidepressants are used for many disorders including social anxiety. Although, antidepressants can have many side effects when taking them. While there are many treatments to social anxiety, Psychologist Ruth Perednik has spent year of research to come up with a more effective treatment. "Ruth Perednik-for 20 years-developed an effective treatment for SM (Selective Mutism, AKA Social Anxiety), both through direct intervention by parents, teachers, and therapists, and utilizing her online treatment intervention" (Siegel-Itzkovich). Ruth Perednik found that the basic treatments were getting old and not working quite effectively, so she created a different treatment that mixes with old treatments. Ruth Perednik developed her treatment through Jerusalem psychology. "Ruth Perednik developed an SM treatment based on cognitive behavioral therapy techniques in the framework of her work in the Jerusalem psychological services in the Jerusalem Municipality" (Siegel-Itzkovich). Ruth Perednik published her book that included her newly developed treatment. This book is a guide for any adult, teen, or parent to help their child with social anxiety issues. Another treatment the some doctors use are support groups, this treatments bring individuals with social anxiety together and discuss their issues. "Many people with social anxiety also find support groups helpful...You can also learn how others with social anxiety disorder approach and overcome the fear of social situations" (National Institute of Mental Health). These people can help each other out and lets others try different methods to help with the disorder. After symptoms of social anxiety start to fade, some people must still take the

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medications because the symptoms can come back. “For some people, the symptoms of social anxiety disorder may fade over time and medication can be discontinued. Others may need to take medication for years to prevent a relapse” (Mayo Clinic Staff). It is best to take the medications occasionally just in case the symptoms comes back after they went away. “Doctors will work to find the best medication, dose, and duration of treatment. Many people with social anxiety disorder obtain the best results with a combination of medication and CBT or other psychotherapies” (National Institute of Mental Health). Doctors try their absolute best into over to help patients out with overcoming social anxiety. With all these different types of treatments, individuals should never give them up if they do not work.

Although there are many treatments for social anxiety, there are also many effects social anxiety has on people. Social anxiety tends to effect teens in high school, or with teens and adults getting jobs or making friends. “People with social anxiety disorder may drop out of school, lose their jobs and avoid seeking work due to difficulty interviewing for jobs. They tend to have trouble creating and maintaining friendships and romantic relationships” (Donnica Moore, M.D.). Having social anxiety could cause these people to develop depressing because they might feel lonely and upset. Everyday activities could be effected by social anxiety. “Doing everyday things in front of people-such as eating or drinking in front of others or using a public restroom-also causes anxiety or fear. The person is afraid that he or she will be humiliated, judged, and rejected” (National Institute of Mental Health). People will never go out; the individuals will sit at home so they cannot have anxiety attacks in public. There can be other different ways that people are effected by anxiety, not just socially. “Some people with social anxiety disorder do not have anxiety in social situations but have performance anxiety instead” (National Institute of Mental Health). This type of anxiety is similar to social anxiety but is more based off activities in groups, sport activities, or community activities. Having social anxiety can also lead to other disorders such as eating disorders. “This can lead to feelings isolation and disconnectedness, and trigger a more serious eating disorder such as anorexia nervosa or bulimia” (Knolls). Developing more disorders will cause individuals to be depressed, stressed, or have suicidal thoughts. When an individual with social anxiety is given a task, they are more than likely to not start or complete it. “An anxious person may be concerned about impeccable functioning, as a result of which he or she is stressed about or refrains from doing a given task” (Siegel-Itzkovich). Many important task will be incomplete which will result in the individual will get in much trouble possibly. The effects of social anxiety cause many symptoms. “Associated physical symptoms may include palpitations, faintness, blushing, and profuse sweating” (Donnica Moore, M.D.) People with social anxiety will keep to themselves in order for these symptoms do not occur. Having social anxiety can and will ruin a person life if it takes over all the time. “Left untreated, social anxiety disorder may run your life” (Mayo Clinic Staff). With all the effects that social anxiety has, it can devour and destroy an individual’s life.

In addition to the effects of social anxiety disorder, the lifestyle is different from others. There

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are many different ways individuals can stop social anxiety from escalating badly, through change in lifestyles. “Healthy lifestyle can also help combat anxiety. Make sure to get enough sleep and exercise, eat a healthy diet, and turn to family and friends who you trust for support” (National Institute of Mental Health). Changing lifestyles to suit having social anxiety can work out best with support. People can learn to control the way they are in social situations that usually cause symptoms to occur. “...you can try some self-help techniques to handle situations that are likely to trigger your symptoms” (Mayo Clinic Staff). Being put in situations to be able to help simmer down the symptoms can be relieving. Changing lifestyles can be a key component to treatments. “Lifestyle changes are simple but powerful tools in treating depression and anxiety and they are an essential component of an integrated approach to treatment” (University of Minnesota). Not only do lifestyle changes help social anxiety disorder but other disorders that are developed also. Starting these lifestyle changes can up lift an individual mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. “In some cases, lifestyle change alone can lift depression or relieve anxiety, so it makes sense to start with them right away” (University of Minnesota). Social anxiety lifestyle changes helps individuals in the future in social situations. Taking away negatives in situations and turning them positive can help social anxiety disorder very much. “Learning how to control the physical symptoms of anxiety through relaxation techniques and breathing exercises. Challenging negative, unhelpful thoughts that trigger and fuel social anxiety, replacing them with views that are more balanced” (Melinda Smith, M.A., Jeanne Segal, Ph.D., and Jennifer Shubin). With the techniques that people with social anxiety learn, will make life a little simpler and easy for them. CBT has been recommended for helping to change lifestyles for social anxiety. “Of all the professional treatments available, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) has been shown to work best for treating social anxiety disorder. CBT is based on the premise that what you think affects how you feel, and your feelings affect your behavior. So if you change the way you think about social situations that give you anxiety, you will feel and function better” (Melinda Smith, M.A., Jeanne Segal, Ph.D., and Jennifer Shubin). With the change of behavior in an individual’s life, it can help with interactions with others socially. Getting other styles of treatment and combining them will help the process of slowing down symptoms. “While lifestyle changes alone aren’t enough to overcome social phobia or social anxiety disorder, they can support your overall treatment progress” (Melinda Smith, M.A., Jeanne Segal, Ph.D., and Jennifer Shubin). Doctors will combine different treatments in order for there to be better results of symptoms decreasing.

Social anxiety disorder is one of the most common mental disorders, although there are many treatments and conditions, there are many effects this disorder can have on people, and the lifestyle can be difficult and different from other. While there are many anxiety disorders, social anxiety is the most common affecting over 40 million Americans. With the understanding about social anxiety, individuals can help either a family member, a friend, or themselves out with the complications of social anxiety disorder. People that care about someone they know who has social anxiety, they can be helpful to change their lifestyle with dealing with this disorder.

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