



NetCare Access is your connection to mental health and alcohol/drug addiction services in Franklin County.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, visit one of our crisis sites or call our 24-hour NetCare Access Crisis Hotline at (614) 276-C.A.R.E.

ACCESSING Information About **Panic Disorder**

What is panic disorder?

A person with panic disorder may have feelings of terror that strike suddenly and repeatedly with no warning. These “panic attacks” are characterized by a pounding heart, chest pains, feelings of terror and being out of control, dizziness, shaking or trembling. A person with panic disorder cannot predict when an attack will occur, and many develop intense anxiety between episodes, worrying when and where the next attack will strike.

Panic disorder is an anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders are not just a case of “the nerves.” They are illnesses, often related to the biological makeup and life experiences of the individual, and they frequently run in families. Anxiety disorders are the most common of all the mental disorders. Anxious feelings may be so uncomfortable that to avoid them one may stop some everyday activities.

Other types of anxiety disorders include generalized anxiety disorder, specific phobias, social phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Facts

- Panic disorder strikes between 3 and 6 million Americans.
- It is twice as common in women as in men.
- It can appear at any age – in children or in the elderly – but most often it begins in young adults.
- Not everyone who experiences panic attacks will develop panic disorder – for example, many people have one attack but never have another.
- Panic disorder is often accompanied by other conditions, such as depression or alcoholism.
- Panic attacks can lead to phobias of the places and situations where the panic attack occurs, for example, if a panic attack strikes while you are riding in an elevator, you may develop a fear of elevators and perhaps start avoiding them.
- One third of all people with panic disorder develop a condition called agoraphobia – where a person avoids any situation they fear would make them feel helpless if a panic attack occurs.

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Signs and Symptoms

Someone with panic disorder may:

- experience a pounding heart
- have chest pains
- feel lightheaded or dizzy
- experience nausea or stomach problems
- have flushes or chills
- have shortness of breath or a feeling of smothering or choking
- feel tingling or numbness
- experience feelings of unreality
- have a feeling of being out of control, going crazy or terror
- have a fear of dying
- sweat

Treatment

Studies have shown that proper treatment helps 70 to 90 percent of people with panic disorder. Significant improvement is usually seen within 6 to 8 weeks. Types of treatment include:

- Cognitive-behavioral therapy
- Medications
- Combination of cognitive-behavioral therapy and medications
- Exposure therapy

How to receive help

A person with panic disorder can benefit from talking with a mental health professional, such as a psychologist, psychiatrist or social worker, who can assist in providing the individual and his or her family with additional approaches to treatment.

If you or someone you know has panic disorder or is in a crisis, contact NetCare Access at (614) 276-C.A.R.E. Mental health assessments are provided at both of Netcare's crisis sites, located at 199 S. Central Avenue and 741 E. Broad Street, on a walk-in, first-come-first-served basis, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

NetCare Access provides 24-hour crisis intervention and assessment services to Franklin County residents experiencing a mental health or alcohol/drug crisis. For more information on Netcare's services, contact us at:

Netcare Corporation
199 S. Central Avenue
Columbus, OH 43223

Administrative line: (614) 274-9500
Adult Assessment West (199 S. Central Avenue location): (614) 278-0122
Adult Assessment East (741 E. Broad Street location): (614) 278-0155
24-hour crisis hotline: (614) 276-C.A.R.E (2273)

www.netcareaccess.org

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