What is anxiety?

Everyone feels anxious, tense, or overwhelmed at times. These feelings are usually in response to a stressful situation. They pass once the situation is over or the feelings simply decrease with time. When you have an anxiety disorder, however, the feelings of worry are constant.

There are six types of anxiety disorders.

* **Generalized anxiety disorder** involves constant worrying that is difficult to control
* **Social Anxiety** involves having intense anxiety about social situations
* **Specific Phobias** involve strong fear and avoiding of specific objects/situations (spiders, heights, needles)
* **Separation Anxiety** involves feeling afraid of separating from a parent or a partner
* **Selective Mutism** involves not speaking in social situations due to anxiety
* **Panic disorders/Agoraphobia** involves a panic attack, which is sudden intense fear that causes strong physical reactions when there is no real danger

**What does it mean to have an anxiety disorder?**

There are many different symptoms of anxiety disorders and different people have different symptoms. Some common anxiety symptoms include:

Reference: National Institute of Mental Health, Anxiety Disorders. Retrieved on June 25, 2019.
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/anxiety-disorders-listing.shtml>

* Frequent worrying and a sense of dread that is hard to control
* Feeling restless and having difficulty relaxing
* Feeling tense and irritable
* Having a hard time concentrating
* Trouble falling/staying asleep
* Feeling tired
* Having headaches, muscle aches, stomach aches, unexplained pains
* Avoiding things that are important to you because of anxiety

**Are there other problems from anxiety disorders?**

Yes. Anxiety is a very uncomfortable feeling so many people may “numb out” with alcohol or drugs, withdraw from others, avoid work due to fear of failure, etc. These attempts to decrease anxiety sometimes work in the short term, but often lead to long term issues such as depression, alcohol or drug abuse, and other mental health problems.

**How can I help myself if I have anxiety disorder?**

In Job Corps, we want to help you understand and work with your anxiety so that you can move toward finding employment. Treatment may include brief therapy, medication, and/or participation in groups and activities.

* Talk to your counselor and health and wellness staff
* Ask for reasonable accommodations, if needed

* Stay on your medication, if prescribed
* Keep a routine for eating and sleeping; make sure you get enough sleep
* Exercise regularly
* Avoid caffeine and nicotine, which can worsen anxiety
* Practice stress and anxiety reduction strategies like progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing, mindfulness meditation
* Ask to meet with the CMHC to learn more skills to manage your anxiety
* Ask a close friend to help you stick to your treatment plan

**I know someone who has anxiety. What can I do?**

* If they are thinking about hurting them self or someone else get help immediately
* Do not leave the person alone
* Let the nearest Job Corps staff member know NOW!
* If not able to find a Job Corps staff member quickly, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room
* Access the Job Corps Safety Hotline (844-JC1-SAFE) via text, email, phone, mobile app or web site
* Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
(800) 273-TALK (8255)
TTY: (800) 799-4TTY (4889)