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## Generalised anxiety disorder and its homeopathic treatment

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### Abstract

India is seeing an unexpected exceptional flood of COVID-19 cases and is in a condition of extreme emergency. These have positively elevated the nervousness, fear and worry in people in general by multiple folds. Individuals are not just terrified about getting down with the lethal infection, however they are likewise incredibly worried about their general wellbeing also. While individuals are getting progressively worried about their wellbeing status and

acclimating themselves with various clinical terminologies like quarantine, isolation, oxygen saturation etc., psychological wellness experts are noticing a significant surge in cases of Mental Health issues too. Generalised Anxiety Disorder is one of them and could be managed with Homeopathic Medicines as prescribed by Registered Homeopathic Practitioner.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Generalised Anxiety Disorder, GAD, Mental Health, Homeopathy, Homeopathic Medicines

### Introduction

Mental disorders are a major global public health concern and accounts for 8.5% of the total years of life lost due to premature death and years lived with disability globally. (Lancet, 2015) <sup>[3]</sup> With the current global scenario having far reaching impact on human lives, it has also put light on the availability, accessibility and utilisation of the health care services, especially about mental health worldwide. As per World Health Organisation (WHO), 1 in every 4 adult experiences mental health related issues in their lives at some point and time. The cases of mental issues have increased by leaps and bounds in all over the developed nations and cases soar even higher in developing nations. According to the recent research, it is understood that utilisation of psychological services have surged from past few years even in the remote areas. (Maulik *et al.*, 2017) <sup>[4]</sup>.

Till now the year 2021 has been taxing a toll not only on physical but on mental health also, all due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The global outburst of COVID-19 has brought forth several challenges and the greatest of them all are the mental health issues. Issues ranging from Depression, Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), increased substance abuse, feeling of isolation, hopelessness and uncertainty have significantly affected the mental health of the populace. Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD) is one of the widely prevalent disorder amongst the numerous known mental health issues. GAD affects 20% of the adults worldwide in any given year. The disorder sets in gradually and can begin across at any stage of life, though the risk is highest between childhood and middle age. The lifetime prevalence of anxiety disorders is approximately two times higher in females than in males. (ADAA, 2021) <sup>[1]</sup> Albeit the specific reason for GAD is obscure, there is proof that natural variables, family foundation, and educational knowledge and experiences, especially unpleasant ones, play a wonderful part.

### Definition

GAD is characterised by continuous worry, fear, and a constant feeling of being overwhelmed. Also, it is usually depicted while doing regular activities, leading to persistent, and unrealistic worry regarding day-to-day routine. (Munir and Takov, 2021) <sup>[5]</sup> This worry could be multicentred such as family, health, finance, and the future. It is extreme, hard to control, and is frequently joined by numerous vague mental and actual manifestations. Uncontrolled panic is the crucial lead for generalized anxiety disorder detection.

### Symptoms

Diagnostic criteria in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition (DSM-V) include the following: (Deborah R. Glasofer, 2021)

- Excessive anxiety and worry for at least six months,
- Difficulty controlling the worrying,

- The anxiety is associated with three or more of the below symptoms for at least 6 months:
  - Restlessness, feeling keyed up or on edge,
  - Being easily fatigued,
  - Difficulty in concentrating or mind going blank, irritability,
  - Muscle tension,
  - Sleep disturbance,
  - Irritability
- The anxiety results in significant distress or impairment in social and occupational areas,
- The anxiety is not attributable to any physical cause.

#### The aetiology may include

- Stress
- A physical condition such as diabetes or other comorbidities such as depression
- Genetic, first-degree relatives with generalized anxiety disorder (25%)
- Environmental factors, such as child abuse
- Substance abuse

#### Assessment

GAD is generally hard to diagnose and requires either clinician to diagnose the disorder at the early stages which can lead to better treatment and prognosis, or self-assessment can be equally important. Many adults struggling with GAD experience symptoms for a long time before seeking help medically. Reaching out for a diagnosis can be a challenge in times like these especially when anxiety feels so constant and widespread amid COVID-19.

#### Differential Diagnosis

Since Anxiety is commonly overlapped in many physical and mental health disorders. Some conditions that should be ruled out include: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Panic Disorder social Anxiety Disorder.

#### Treatment

**Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT):** This therapy involves regular meeting to talk with a mental health professional. The goal is to change thinking and behaviours of the concerned. This way of dealing has proved to be successful in leaving a permanent alteration in many people with anxiety. It is considered first-line treatment for anxiety disorders in people who are ready to accept their problem and deal with it. In therapy sessions, one generally learns how to recognize and control the anxious thoughts. Along with therapy, if required medicines are prescribed and no better line of treatment than homeopathy.

**Medication:** Homeopathic treatment has shown significant results in treating and curing many mental health issues. GAD is also one of the problems which has solution in homeopathy. Though homeopathy is a science which is based on individualisation and every patient put its own stamp on the disease where different signs and symptoms comes into play. However, one can consider some of these homeopathic medicines for identifying that one constitutional remedy for the patient who suffers from GAD. Selection of medicine can be majorly according to the symptoms presented and can

include other medicines enlisted in Homeopathic Materia Medica.

**Aconite Napellus:** A panic attack that comes on suddenly with extraordinarily strong fear (even fear of death) may indicate towards to this remedy. Flushing face, shortness of breath, and an immense state of anxiety may be accompanied by strong palpitations. Occasionally, a shaking experience could be the underlying cause.

**Argentum Nitricum:** This relieves apprehension or stage fright accompanied with a feeling of hurriedness and agitation. A physical sign corresponding to this medicine is stomach aches with belching, due to improper digestion.

**Arsenicum Album:** People who are anxious about their health in depth, and extremely concerned with order and security, often benefit from this remedy. Panic attacks often occur around midnight or the exceedingly early hours of the morning. The person may feel exhausted yet still be restless—fidgeting, pacing, and anxiously moving from one place to other. These people may also have digestive problems or asthma attacks accompanied by anxiety.

**Gelsemium:** This relieves apprehension or stage fright accompanied by a feeling of trembling, dizziness, general weakness, headache, and difficulty to concentrate and recall memories.

**Natrum muriaticum:** Deep emotions and a self-protective shyness can make these people seem reserved, aloof, and private. Even when feeling being alone, they tend to stay away from social gatherings, not knowing what to say or do. Claustrophobia, anxiety at night (with fears of robbers or intruders), insomnia, and migraines are most seen when this remedy is indicated.

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