

➤ To Learn More

Books:

The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook,
by Edmund J. Bourne, 1998

**The Sky is Falling: Understanding
and Coping with Phobias, Panic and
OCD**, by Raeann Dumont, 1996

**Dying of Embarrassment: Help for
Social Anxiety and Phobia**, by B.G.
Markway, PhD., and C. N. Carmin,
1995

Websites:

www.adaa.org
www.nami.org

➤ Help for anxiety disorders in the Montreal area

- ❑ *Montreal Children's Hospital* —
514-412-4449
- ❑ *St. Justine Hospital* — **514-345-4683**
- ❑ *Montreal General Hospital –
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Clinic*
— **514-485-7772**
- ❑ *Royal Victoria Hospital-Adolescent
Psychiatry* — **514-842-1231**
Ext. 31619
- ❑ *Kids Help Phone* — **1-800-668-6868**
- ❑ *Drug Help Line Montreal* — **514-
527-2626**
- ❑ *Herzl Family Practice Centre –
Adolescent Clinic* **514-340-8253**
- ❑ *Head & Hands* — **514-481-0277**
- ❑ *Association des CLSC et des
CHSLD du Québec (Your local
CLSC – number referral)* — **514-
931-1448**

AMI-Quebec has many programs to help families and people suffering from mental illness. If you recognize yourself or someone you care about in this pamphlet, please contact us and we will direct you to an appropriate resource.

514-486-1448
www.amiquebec.org
outreach@amiquebec.org

ANXIETY DISORDERS



AMI-QUÉBEC **Action on Mental Illness**

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"Deep breath in... deep breath out... in, out, in, out..."
Johnny has learned to control his anxiety disorder with breathing techniques and self-monitoring. He knows he's not like other people. Most people get nervous before an important exam, a big date, soccer tryouts... Maybe they'll have sweaty palms, butterflies in the stomach or a quick heartbeat. Those feelings of anxiousness are normal. What Johnny experiences differs dramatically from normal feelings of nervousness. His anxiety comes without warning and usually for no reason.

"...I can be sitting doing homework and I'll feel it happening. The shaking, and the breathing and the sweats, and the heart pounding and the pain in the chest - I feel like I'm having a heart attack or something. But I never do..."

Symptoms of anxiety disorders can make the simplest of life's routines unbearably uncomfortable.

Fortunately, Johnny sought help. Never mind the reactions of his friends or family. He had hopes that he could be treated. And he was right.

Anxiety disorders are the most common of emotional disorders. Unfortunately, many people with this disorder never seek help because they do not recognize that what they're feeling is a sign of

illness or they fear the reactions of family and friends. Fortunately, these illnesses generally respond well to treatment and the majority of patients experience significant relief from their symptoms. These symptoms can include:

- Overwhelming feelings of panic and fear
- Uncontrollable obsessive thoughts
- Nausea, sweating, muscle tension and other physical reactions

➤ **Types of Anxiety Disorders**

Panic Disorder - an overwhelming fear of being in danger. **Warning signs:**

- Pounding heart or chest pain
- Sweating, trembling, or shaking
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Fear of losing control or dying
- Feeling unreal or disconnected

Phobias — an uncontrollable, irrational, and persistent fear of a specific object, situation or activity such as:

- Social phobia** — excessive fear of being embarrassed in social situations. Most people experiencing this will try, at any cost, to avoid such situations or endure them with much anxiety.
- Agoraphobia** — fear of experiencing a panic attack in any type of public situation. If left untreated, agoraphobia can become so severe

that a person may refuse to leave his house.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

A constant sense of unease and worry even when there is nothing to worry about. People with GAD are likely to have other mental health problems such as depression, substance abuse or another anxiety disorder. **Warning signs:**

- Inability to relax; easily tired and irritable
- Have difficulty concentrating
- Insomnia, fatigue, headaches
- Muscle tension, trembling

➤ **Treatment**

Most anxiety disorders respond very well to treatment. The most common ones are medication and psychotherapy. Often a combination of both is most effective.