

CONCERN Employee Assistance Program

- Your partner in finding solutions to work, family and personal matters

NEWS YOU CAN USE

March 2012

Information and tips to help you live healthier and happier

Anxious people have higher heart attack risk

According to researchers at the University of Southern California, men who scored the highest on tests for anxiety were 30 to 40 percent more likely than the others to have a heart attack. The findings held, said the researchers, even when standard cardiovascular risk factors such as high blood pressure, obesity, high cholesterol, age, cigarette smoking and blood sugar levels were factored in. No matter what risk factors were present, anxious, fearful people have a higher risk.

3 strategies to decrease worry and anxiety

The good news is that anxiety is very treatable. If you are concerned about the amount of worry and anxiety you may be feeling, below are three strategies to help:

Control your worry. Select a half-hour "worry period" that will take place at the same time and place each day. Observe your worrying throughout your day. When you "catch" a worry beginning, postpone it to your worry period, reminding yourself that you will have time later to worry about it and there is no use upsetting yourself now. When you get to your worry period, spend 30 minutes thinking about your concerns and what you can do about them. Try not to dwell on what "might" happen. Focus more on what's really happening. Distinguish between worries over which you have little or no control, and worries about problems that you can influence. If you can influence the problem, do some problem-solving and take action. If the worry is largely beyond your control, recognize that little or nothing can be done and that you are only making yourself feel bad by worrying.

What causes you to feel anxious? Try to pinpoint what it is you are feeling anxious about. If you can recognize what's really bothering you, what can you do to eliminate or minimize the situation in some way so that it isn't so stressful? More important, how can you react differently



so you won't be so affected by this situation?

Exercise and learn relaxation techniques. Not only can exercise and relaxation techniques ease tension and relax the body, they can give you a break from worry. For exercise, focus on aerobic exercise like brisk walking, jogging, swimming or cycling. Relaxation techniques may include muscle relaxation, yoga, biofeedback, meditation or deep breathing. Choose what works best for you.



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