

Signs and Symptoms of Panic Disorder

0 = Not at all; never. 1 = sometimes; a little. 2 = Moderately. 3 = strongly; nearly all the time.

Rating	Symptoms
<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>A. Panic Attack</p> <p>Have you ever had a sudden spell when you felt anxious and a combination of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Racing heart - Tightness or pain in the chest - Difficulty breathing; shortness of breath - Nausea; butterflies - Light-headedness; like you might faint - A sense that things were not real or that you were outside yourself - Shakiness; trembling - Pins and needles or numbness (usually around the face or hands) - Fear of a heart attack or stroke - Fear of losing control or going crazy <p>How many of these anxiety attacks have you had? _____</p> <p>When was the last one? _____</p> <p>B. Panic Disorder</p> <p>1. Do you dread or fear another anxiety attack coming back? _____</p> <p>2. Do you find yourself avoiding <i>places</i> that make you anxious or in which you think you might panic? (e.g. driving; shopping; going out alone...) _____</p> <p>3. Do you find yourself avoiding <i>situations or activities</i> that make you anxious or in which you think you might panic? (e.g. exercise; arguing; scary movies...) _____</p> <p>4. If you have to leave home, do you have safety measures to help? If 'yes', then can you give me an example? _____</p> <p>.....</p>

Instructions and Guidelines for use

A. Panic Attack

If a client responds with a '2' for three or more of these symptoms, then they have very likely had a panic attack. They may wish to discuss this with you or they may wish for further psychoeducation from a psychologist.

Check that the symptoms were of anxiety or emotional source, rather than being organic or medical (such as thyroid related or due to medication etc...)

A. Panic Disorder

This condition is characterised by a fear of future panic attacks. If the avoidance is substantial, the term **agoraphobia** is warranted.

A score of 3 is probably indicative of a problem, while **a score of 6** or more is indicative of a serious disorder with significant morbidity (depression and poor social and vocational functioning)

The optimal treatment for Panic Disorder is CBT, including education, teaching thought-challenging skills and deliberate exposure to their own anxiety symptoms. Some studies suggest that SSRIs add to the effectiveness in more severe presentations. Benzodiazepines are unhelpful apart from very short-term (one week) relief. In panic disorder the core treatment is to help the patient to no longer fear their own anxiety and any drug that is used to avoid or escape the symptoms of anxiety limits the effectiveness of that treatment.

An information sheet on panic and its management is available for clients.

If you want to discuss treatment with a fully qualified psychologist, you can call
Basten & Associates, Clinical Psychologists on 9891-1766.
Chatswood Sydney Westmead