

school, health or safety of family members, the future, and whether they'll become ill or injured. They may always think of the worst that could happen. Along with the worry and dread, they may have physical symptoms, too, such as chest pain, headache, tiredness, tight muscles, stomachaches, or even vomiting. GAD can result in missed school days and avoidance of social activities.

- **Panic disorder** is characterized by panic attacks, or episodes of intense fear that occur for no apparent reason. With a panic attack a person may have a sense that things are unreal, and may have physical symptoms like a pounding heart, shortness of breath, dizziness, numbness, or tingling feelings. Sometimes a person having a panic attack mistakenly feels he may be dying or having a heart attack. The panic symptoms are caused by overactivity of the body's normal fear response.
- **Agoraphobia** is an intense fear of having a panic attack. People with agoraphobia have had a panic attack before, and worry so much about having another that they avoid going anywhere they think it could possibly occur. They are often left with very few places they feel comfortable going outside their own home.
- **Social anxiety disorder** is an intense fear of social situations. Teens with social anxiety may feel too nervous to raise their hand or talk in class. They may fear making a mistake, saying the wrong answer, or looking foolish. They may feel extremely shy and anxious in situations where they have to interact with others, such as parties, the lunch table, or when they meet new people. They may be overly self-conscious about their clothes or hair, worrying that they might be criticized or teased, or that they might stand out or be noticed. With an extreme form of social anxiety called selective mutism, some kids and teens may be too anxious to talk at all in certain situations.
- **Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)** is characterized by **obsessions** - thoughts or impulses that occur again and again and that a person feels he can't control - and **compulsions** - behaviors or rituals that a person feels he must perform to control disturbing thoughts and relieve the anxiety the thoughts trigger. With OCD a teen may, for example, have constant worry and fear about illness or germs, and may become stuck in a pattern of washing and cleaning that becomes time-consuming, distressing, and feels impossible to control. The worries (obsessions) with OCD are unrealistic, but are frightening to the person who has them. For example, a teen with illness obsessions may worry that just by reading about an illness or driving past a hospital he could become ill.
- **Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** refers to anxiety relating to a traumatic or terrifying past experience. With PTSD, a frightening, life-threatening event such as an accident, serious violence (such as rape, abuse, shooting, or gang violence), or a natural disaster (such as an earthquake, tornado, hurricane) causes such a severe fear response that the person may experience flashbacks, nightmares, or constant fear, worry, and stress after the fact. PTSD may occur within days or weeks after the life-threatening event, or it may be delayed and occur much later.
- **Specific phobias** are intense unrealistic fears relating to specific situations or things (that are not actually dangerous), such as heights, dogs, or flying in an airplane. Phobias usually cause people to avoid what they are afraid of. Some people can work around a phobia if it involves something they do not have to encounter in their everyday life. Other phobias may involve more common situations or things, and may be harder to steer clear of even if people do their