

DSM 5 Diagnostic Criterion

Recurrent unexpected **Panic Attack**

≥ **1 month** of (1) persistent concern OR (2) maladaptive behavior

Criteria Panic Attack

Peak at 10 minute

≥ **4 symptoms**

Palpitations, pounding heart, or accelerated heart rate.

Sweating

Trembling or shaking

Sensations of shortness of breath or smothering

Feelings of choking

Chest pain or discomfort

Nausea or abdominal distress

Feeling dizzy, unsteady, light-headed, or faint

Chills or heat sensations

Paresthesias (numbness or tingling sensations)

Derealization (feelings of unreality) or depersonalization (being detached from oneself)

Fear of losing control or "going crazy"

Fear of dying

Maladaptive change in behavior

Avoidance of a particular situations

fear of the occurrence of a panic attack ⇒ avoid situation where panic attack are expected to occur

Inter-ceptive Avoidance Avoidance of internal bodily sensation

Maladaptive change in behavior (cont)

Example: Avoidance of exercises, sex, caffeine, alcohol, scary movies, etc.

Safety seeking Behaviors Behaviors to avoid disasters (negative reinforcement of the danger of panic attacks)

Example: Frequent attendance at medical facilities for fear of medical problems, carrying antianxiety medicine

Experiential Avoidance Unwillingness to experience fear and anxiety (interference with Exposure therapy)

Example: saying that you have a heart attack instead of acknowledging your panic attack

Epidemiology

Prevalence 4-6%

Gender 2F:1M

Age of onset 24 years old

Comorbidity

Anxiety disorders Specific phobias, social phobia, and agoraphobia

Mood Disorder Panic disorder precedes the onset of major depressive disorders (33%)

Substance use disorder Alcohol, drugs, etc.

Etiology

David Clark Theory of Panic Bodily/Psychological symptoms (e.g. dizziness, palpitations)

Catastrophic misinterpretation (e.g. "I might collapse, go crazy, have a heart attack, choke or suffocate")

Maladaptive Safety behaviors (e.g. Avoid situations and check my pulse excessively)

Reiss & McNally Theory of Panic Anxiety Sensitivity ("fear of anxiety")

Treatment

Medication

SSRIs

Alprazolam (antianxiety drugs)

CBT