

What To Do When You're Having A Panic Attack

When you have a panic attack, it feels like you're drowning in a turbulent and stormy sea with no helping hand to pull you up to the safety of a boat. As you are not able to see any way to get yourself out of the situation, you need to learn some techniques that you can go to when you feel the onset of a panic attack.

Before we look into what techniques you can adopt to bring yourself out of one of these attacks, it is useful to look at what actually happens, physiologically speaking, when you have a panic attack as if you understand what's going on it becomes less scary.

What Happens Physiologically During A Panic Attack?

It is usually very easy to spot the onset of a panic attack as certain physiological symptoms come with this. [Science Daily](#) lists these symptoms as the following:

- Shortness of breath
- A racing heart
- Dizziness
- Chest pain (which is why so many mistake a panic attack for a heart attack)
- Hot flashes
- Trembling
- Choking
- Numbness
- Nausea

The [Mayo Clinic](#) lists several possible causes of a panic attack. Among these are:

- Genetics,
- Significant stress, such as the death of a loved one or divorce,
- If a person is more sensitive to stress, they may be more prone to panic attacks, and
- Changes to how a person's brain functions, such as could be experienced with a traumatic brain injury.

Coping Mechanisms

Identify What Triggers The Panic

The best way to cope with a panic attack is to try and prevent something like this from actually happening. As trigger emotions often cause these types of attacks, identify what these are and work on diffusing these emotions. You may be able to do this on your own, or you may need to seek the assistance of a psychotherapist to get to the root of what's causing these panic attacks.

If your attacks are caused by long-term issues – such as panic disorder – you may need to go onto medication, such as anti-anxiolytics – to help you to deal with the situation. This, in conjunction with talk therapy, has proven to have positive results; however, the treatment needs sustained input from you.

Get Yourself Out Of The Cycle

If you do find yourself slipping into a panic attack, the first thing that you've got to do is recognise what is happening to you and then do something to get you out of the cycle. Do something that you need to concentrate on, such as washing the dishes, cleaning the kitchen countertops or vacuuming

the floor. This will get you out of focusing on the negativity and despair that's currently flowing through your mind so when you no longer concentrate on it, its power over you is released and you can get back to normal.

Panic attacks are debilitating and can leave you utterly drained. However, there are coping mechanisms that you can adopt so that they can become less of an issue in your life.