Panic Attacks

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Information about Panic Attacks and tips for empowering yourself and reassuring others.

Use this knowledge as a starting point to move forward on your own journey.



Anxiety NZ
HERE FOR YOU

Creating a thriving & resilient Aotearoa, NZ.

What are panic attacks?

Panic attacks are sudden and intense episodes of overwhelming anxiety. These episodes typically involve rapid, overwhelming fear and a range of physical symptoms such as a pounding heart, chest pain, shortness of breath, trembling, and profuse sweating.

Panic attacks can vary in duration, ranging from a few minutes to around 20 minutes. The experience can be so intense that panic attacks are often mistaken for signs of a heart attack or other life-threatening conditions, leading to heightened anxiety and fear.

What can I do about it?

You can help yourself by focusing on these steps, and you can also seek the support of a therapist.

1. Regular exercise and a healthy lifestyle can help reduce overall anxiety levels and improve your body's response to stress to reduce the likelihood of panic attacks.
2. Practice deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation exercises to help calm your body's stress response, to reduce anxiety and panic symptoms.
3. Figuring out what triggers your panic attacks, what you believe about physical sensations, and what is at the root of your panic.
4. Identifying and challenging negative thoughts that make you want to avoid things and keep your panic going.
5. Gradual exposure to the situations or triggers that cause panic attacks can help you be less impacted emotionally by your fear response.

If this is happening often, or you feel unable to manage, you're welcome to support options: Anxiety NZ provides support services; learn more here: anxiety.org.nz/services

Panic Attack Quick Sheet

Panic attacks are sudden and intense episodes of overwhelming fear, overwhelming fear and a range of physical symptoms such as a racing heart, shortness of breath, or breath of breath.

A panic attack may involve:

Rapid, overwhelming fear and a range of physical symptoms such as a pounding heart, chest pain, shortness of breath, trembling, and profuse sweating.

How long will they last?

Panic attacks can vary in duration, ranging from a few minutes to around 20 minutes.

Remind Yourself

You are safe, even if it doesn't feel like it

Try Box Breathing:

Tip: Practice this exercise regularly

