

Generalized Anxiety Disorder Websites
Reviewed and Critiqued by
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1. National Institute of Mental Health (n.d.). Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD). Retrieved from: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/generalized-anxiety-disorder-gad/index.shtml>

This website is the first that appears when using a search engine, such as Google or Yahoo. The website provides a general overview of signs, symptoms, and treatment for individuals with GAD. It is my opinion that the website seems designed for individuals who believe they might have GAD than for individuals who have recently been diagnosed. The website focuses on informing individuals on how they can tell if they are experiencing GAD. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is a department of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, thus has accurate and educational information on the website.

The website provides the most information on treatment of and living with GAD. The recommendation for individuals is to first see their primary care physician to rule out any medical causes and then to seek out professional mental health treatment, which aligns with the DSM. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and medication are listed as effective treatments.

2. Smith, M. & Segal, J. (2015). Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD). Retrieved from: <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/generalized-anxiety-disorder-gad.htm>

The authors of this website are Melinda Smith, M.A., and Jeanne Segal, PhD. The website was last updated in February 2015. Helpguide.org is a non-profit website created by educational psychologists after their daughter unfortunately died by suicide. Helpguide.org partners with Harvard Health, a division of the Harvard Medical School. This website provides accurate detail of the definition and symptoms of GAD. It also compares a “normal” worry to a “generalized anxiety disorder” worry, which could be useful for individuals who are using the website to see if they have the symptoms of GAD.

The website provides helpful relaxation strategy tips, such as looking at worries in a different way and connecting with others. It outlines Cognitive Behavioral Strategies and lists medications that are often used to treat GAD. The authors provided many self-help resources and additional references, including a link for a website detailing what GAD looks like in children.

3. Anxiety and Depression Association of America (2015). Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD). Retrieved from: <http://www.adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/generalized-anxiety-disorder-gad>

This website is published by the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, an organization focused on the education, prevention, and treatment of anxiety, depression, OCD, and PTSD. The website provides a general overview of GAD and lists the symptoms and individual may experience. There are multiple videos provided for users to see the difference

between normal anxiety and GAD, to hear a client recall her experience with GAD, and to learn about the effective treatments of GAD.

Additionally, there is a short screening tool for individuals to use at home to test if they or a family member has GAD. The screening tool references the fourth edition of the DSM and has not been updated with the new edition of the DSM. While it does provide a link to find a therapist before the screening test, it is my opinion that self-screening can lead to a misdiagnosis for the individual or a family member. The website does not advise an individual to go to a physician or a mental health professional for help.

4. Psych Central (2014). Generalized Anxiety Disorder Symptoms. Retrieved from: <http://psychcentral.com/disorders/generalized-anxiety-disorder-symptoms/>

The author credited for the Psych Central GAD website is Psych Central Staff but was reviewed by John M. Grohol, Psy.D. on June 17, 2014. The website also cites the fifth edition of the DSM and provides accurate symptoms and a definition of GAD. After the website lists the symptoms of GAD it has a link for users to see the common treatments, such as individual therapy and medications. Similar to other websites, Psych Central provides a self-screening quiz for individuals. However, at the beginning of the screening the website has a disclaimer stating that the screening should not be used as a diagnosis, only as a tool to see if the individual should contact a mental health professional.

This website has much more advertising on the sides of the pages than other sites for GAD. Additionally, Psych Central seems to have more plugs for other books, websites, and therapists than other sites, indicating that the sites' funding may come from these advertisements. While most of these advertisements are relevant and could be helpful for an individual I did not like how it was organized. After reading a section on individual therapy it was recommended I buy a book by a psychologist. It would be my preference if these advertisements were listed on a separate page so users did not feel forced into buying unnecessary items.

5. Mayo Clinic. (2014). Diseases and conditions: Generalized anxiety disorder. Retrieved from: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/generalized-anxiety-disorder/basics/definition/con-20024562>

The website provides information on the symptoms, causes, risk factors, treatment, coping strategies, and prevention of GAD. It also lists common symptoms in children and adolescents. The website advises users to see a doctor when the worrying becomes excessive and interferes with daily life, if the individual feels depressed or abuses substances, and if the individual is having thoughts of suicide. The Mayo Clinic website also has a section to prepare individuals for their first appointment with a physician, such as listing symptoms, sources of stress, and questions they have for the doctor.

The website also includes home herbal remedies for treating GAD, specifically Kava, Valerian, Passionflower, and Thenanie. Mayo Clinic does not have any references cited backing up the claims that these herbal remedies can help which could adversely lead clients into taking something that is not helpful or healthful, but the website does advise an individual to talk with their doctor before using an herbal remedy.