

# Social Anxiety Disorder

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# What Social Anxiety Disorder?

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- Social phobia
  - “an anxiety disorder in which a person has an excessive and unreasonable fear of social situations” –WebMD
  - Anxiety and self-consciousness arise from a fear of being closely watched, judged, and criticized by others.



# Symptoms

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- Symptoms of Social Anxiety



# How Does Social Anxiety Develop?

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- No gene that codes for social anxiety
- “Social anxiety cannot occur unless events, situations, and circumstances in the persons’ environment ‘push’ or ‘lead’ the person to develop it”
- Brain is learning to be socially anxious
  - Cognitive structuring
- Fear of an event triggers anxiety, then the neurons in the brain fire together and over time wire together

# The Brain

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- The brain is creating new neural pathways
  - Neurons clump together and are associated with each other
- The associations trigger anxiety and release it into our system
  - Adrenaline
  - Cortisol



# How Does it Feel?

- Fear
  - Especially of what people think of you
  - Rejection from peers
- Apprehension
- Avoidance
- Pain
- Hiding what's wrong
  - Because they know it's irrational
  - No one understands



# Example

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- A student won't attend the first day of class
  - Fear that the professor will instruct them to go around the room and introduce themselves
  - Thinking about introducing self makes them nauseous
  - Wont think clearly
  - Voice will quaver
  - Thought of it is too much to bear, so just skips the first day



# Therapy

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- Cognitive Therapy
  - Learning strategies, methods, and concepts that change the brain
    - Form new neural pathways that continue to grow; new feelings, beliefs, and thoughts
  - Done through repetition
- Creates permanent changes
  - Change neurology of the brain
- Through this people can overcome social anxiety disorder





# Medications

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- Yes, there are medications
- They only create a temporary fix
  - Will always need to take them



# What Will You See in the Classroom?

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- Difficulty transition from home to school
- Refusal to attend school
- Avoidance of activities with peers
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty concentrating
- Learning disorders



# Accommodations

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- Establish check ins
- Accommodate late arrival due to difficulty separating
- Provide safe place
- Relaxation techniques: deep breathing
- Modify stressful situations
- Encourage small group interactions
- Avoid singling them out in front of class
- Reward child's effort



# Works Cited

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- <http://www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/guide/mental-health-social-anxiety-disorder>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjtZkU5wPVk>
- <https://socialanxietyinstitute.org/social-anxiety-chemical-imbbalances-brain-neural-pathways>
- <https://socialanxietyinstitute.org/living-with-social-anxiety>
- [http://www2.massgeneral.org/schoolpsychiatry/info\\_socialphobia.asp](http://www2.massgeneral.org/schoolpsychiatry/info_socialphobia.asp)