# **5** Finger Hand **Breathing technique**

- Start by stretching your hand out with your fingers
- With the index finger of the other hand, slowly trace the outside of your hand beginning with bottom of your thumb
- Breathe in while tracing upwards and breathe out when tracing downwards
- Continue this process until you reach your pinkie finger
- \delta Repeat until you feel centred 🤗



## **Supporting Your Partner**

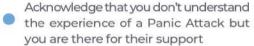
Supporting a loved one living with Panic will help with their recovery. Here are some tips that might help you help them:

- Learn about Panic Disorder
- Encourage healthy behaviour, and avoid criticizing irrational fear or avoidance
- Help set specific goals that are realistic and can be approached one step at a time
- Don't assume you know what your partner needs. Ask how you can help. Listen carefully to the response

- you are there for their support
- Encourage treatment

## Recovery

Recovery requires hard work on may seem like a slow process,





the part of the person with Panic Disorder and patience on the part of the partner and family. It but the rewards are well worth it.



DISORDER

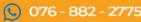




0800 - 456 - 789

24 hr Suicide Crisis Helpline \ 0800 - 567 - 567

(9am-4pm) WhatsApp Chatline | (0) 076 - 882 - 2775



















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## About **Panic Attacks**

www.sadag.org

## Get to know your disorder

Panic Attacks involve short periods of terrifying fear, along with physical symptoms.

Your heart may pound, you may feel sick, dizzy, out of breath; scared, your fingers and legs may tingle, or have pain in your chest. These things can happen unexpectedly when there is no obvious reason to feel fear or panic. Most people with panic disorder feel scared about having another panic attack and avoid places in which they believe these attacks are likely to occur again

### Panic Attack Symptoms



Trembling or shaking

Sweating



Fast heartbeat/



racing heart





Shortness of breath





Fear of dying



Hot flushes. Tingling in fingers cold sweats



Feeling Unreal/

## When do Panic Attacks occur?

Feeling

Panic attacks differ from person to person. Some people may have a Panic Attack then don't ever experience another, or you might find that you have them regularly, or several in a short space of time. You might notice that particular places, situations or activities seem to trigger Panic Attacks. Often triggers are associated with previous traumatic events. For example, they might happen every time you enter a shopping mall or ahead of a public presentation. Most panic attacks last between 5 to 20 minutes. They can come on very quickly, feel very scary but it does end

### What is the Difference?

Anxiety - Intense, excessive and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations. Physical symptoms like stomach aches, headaches, increase in heart rates and hyperventilation may occur

Panic Attacks - A panic attack is a sudden strong feeling of fear that can happen anywhere, at any time. An attack usually passes in 5 to 10 minutes, but it can linger for hours. It can feel like you're having a heart attack or a stroke. Panic Attacks may happen several times a day

Panic Disorder - Panic disorder is when you experience recurring panic attacks where you have terrifying and overwhelming feelings of fear even though you're not in any danger

## What CAUSES Panic Attacks?

It's not known what causes panic attacks or panic disorder, but these factors may play a role:



- High level of stress
- Genetics (Someone in your family has it)
- Certain changes in the way parts of your brain function
- Phobias, Substance Abuse, or Depression
- Temperament that is more sensitive to stress or prone to negative emotions



Panic attacks may come on suddenly and without warning at first, but over time, they're usually triggered by certain situations.

- A serious illness or accident
- The death of a close friend
- Separation from family
- Divorce / Job loss
- The birth of a baby

## Panic Disorder is treatable

## Types of treatment

Many people experience symptom relief and improvement in their quality of life with the appropriate professional care. However, treatment success varies from person to person. Some people respond to treatment after a few weeks while others may take longer. An experienced Mental Health Professional will conduct a comprehensive assessment before discussing an individualized treatment plan.

Medication is prescribed after assessment and consultation with a Psychiatrist or GP. The goal of medication is to block panic attacks. Medication is phased out with the guidance of a practitioner provided the frequency of panic attacks has slowed down or stopped.



## Therapy



Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) has been proven to be the most effective type of Psychotherapy for Panic.CBT teaches various techniques to help to break the link between

### Relaxation Techniques

These techniques can help you slow down your thoughts, ease stress and anxiety, and counteract many of the cognitive and physical symptoms of panic disorder. Examples of relaxation techniques are Meditation, Mindfulness and Yoga,

## Preparing for your Appointment

- Write down your symptoms, including when they first occurred and how often you've had them
- Include key personal information, including traumatic events in your past and any stressful major events
- Bring your medical history including a list of your medication (if you take any)
- Have your questions prepared to ask

## What to do durning a Panic Attack?

- Try not to fight what you are feeling Often fighting feelings or pushing them away can actually increase your fear of Panic and give it more power. It is important to remind yourself that Panic is never permanent and it will pass after a few minutes.
- Control your breathing Controlling your breathing can be very effective when used when you start feeling the first signs of Panic. (Refer to the back for an easy method).
- Challenge your fear Ask yourself questions like, 'What do I know from my past experiences with Panic Attacks? Have I had these feelings before and did they harm or kill me? Did these feelings only last a few minutes?'
- Give yourself time Try not to rush yourself through Panic, Acknowledge your symptoms as just symptoms, remind yourself that you can separate how you feel from what you think or fear is happening.

### How to Cope with a Panic attack



**Count backwards** from 100 in threes



**Practise slow deep** 



listen to music



Phone a Friend



clear your mind



Write down your



Practise mindfulness



Seek a doctor's help



## Join a Support Group

Join a Support Group to help maintain your wellbeing. It is a group of people that share similar problems or experiences and are there to help and support each other