

Brittany Fichter



Brittany writes about her experiences with Tourettes, OCD tendencies, general anxiety, and the faithfulness of God through it all. She has a degree in elementary education, and has been published in several magazines. She loves getting to know people, so feel free to email her any time.

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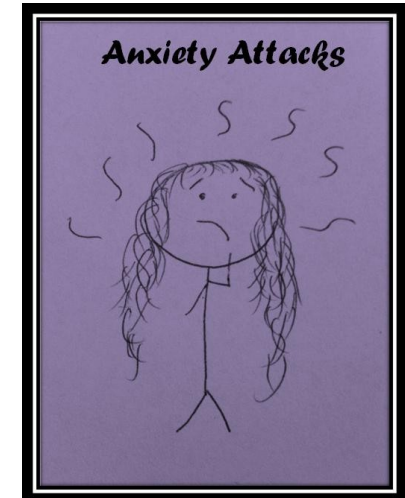
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Detecting & Managing Anxiety Attacks

What can you do to stop an anxiety attack?



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How do I know it's an anxiety attack?

Symptoms of an Anxiety Attack:

- ◆ Unexplained Shortness of Breath (You haven't been running recently)
- ◆ Sudden, rapid rise in heart rate
- ◆ An unusual number of [tics](#) (if you have tics)
- ◆ Sudden restlessness, sudden high amounts of energy
- ◆ Shaking
- ◆ Crying without reason

The first time I had an anxiety attack in college, I thought I was having a heart attack. I hadn't had one since I was young, and it took me by surprise. It's not uncommon for people with anxiety attacks to run to the emergence room thinking they're going to die. The good news is that an anxiety attack, while unsettling, isn't the same thing as a heart attack. There are things you can do to not only respond, but be proactive in the future.

Responding to Anxiety Attacks

- ◆ Praying, reading God's Word, meditating on how great His love is.
- ◆ Changing environments (going to a different room or going outside)
- ◆ Taking slow, deep breaths
- ◆ A drink of cold water
- ◆ Physical touch—Hugs, hand holding, or backrubs can do wonders. (Obviously, you need a trusted friend or family member nearby for this.)
- ◆ Exercise—Getting fresh oxygen to your brain
- ◆ Putting on soothing [music](#)
- ◆ [Aromatherapy](#)—Lighting a favorite scented candle, smelling a favorite essential oil, or taking a bath with some soothing soap.

Being Proactive with Anxiety Attacks

- ◆ Healthy, regular [diet](#)—Keeping out most of the bad fats and processes sugars, and eating lots of whole grains, lean meats, fruits, and veggies.
- ◆ Regular exercise—Exercise produces [neurotransmitters](#) that lower the neurochemicals responsible for stress.
- ◆ Going to God regularly to find peace in His [love](#).

Kicking Anxiety's Butt

It's hard to know just when an anxiety attack is going to strike. Your body will have its own signals that red flag an impending attack. The more you take notice of these signs, the easier it will become to prepare for them. Anxiety attacks may strike when they want, but you have the ability to fight back.