



ANXIETY OF CHILDHOOD

Does it seem to you *that your child worries more than other children?* Are you concerned about what seem to be *excessive fears. . .of leaving you, of social situations, of doing anything new?* Is your child suffering from anxiety?

Take the test.

Check those statements that best describe your child, more often than not, over the last few months.

- My child has an ongoing fear of social situations involving unfamiliar people.
- My child worries excessively about a number of events or activities.
- My child experiences shortness of breath or a racing heart for no apparent reason.
- My child often appears anxious when interacting with peers and avoids them.
- My child has persistent and unreasonable fear of an object or situation such as flying, heights or animals.
- When my child encounters a feared object or situation, he/she reacts by freezing, clinging, or having a tantrum.
- My child worries excessively about her competence and the quality of her performance.
- My child cries, has tantrums, or refused to leave a familiar person.
- My child has experienced a decline in classroom performance, has refused to go to school, or has avoided age-appropriate social activities.
- My child spends too much time each day doing things over and over again (for example, hand washing, checking things, counting.)
- My child has exaggerated fears of people or events (burglars, kidnappers, car accidents, crowds.)
- My child has a high number of nightmares, headaches, or stomachaches.
- My child repetitively re-enacts a disturbing event when playing with toys.
- My child redoes tasks because of excessive dissatisfaction with less-than-perfect performance.

Score your results

If you checked 3 or more of these statements, and your child has behaved this way more often than not for several weeks, you should share the results with your physician or with a mental health professional.

If you checked fewer than 3 statements, but still feel concerned about your child's ability to function in everyday life, you may also want to share the results with a health care provider.

Childhood anxiety can include: separation anxiety, performance anxiety, and/or excessive worrying. Your physician can rule out medical conditions that could contribute to the behaviors. Since medications are used cautiously with children, it is generally preferable to try counseling first. A mental health professional can identify emotional or social issues that may be contributing to the problem, and assist parents in helping their children cope with fears.

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