



**Anxiety Disorders Information**

- [Brief Overview of Anxiety Disorders](#)
- [GAD](#)
- [OCD](#)
- [PTSD](#)
- [Panic Disorder & Agoraphobia](#)
- [Specific Phobia](#)
- [Social Phobia](#)
- [Children & Adolescents](#)
- [Helping a Family Member](#)
- [Anxiety & the Elderly](#)
- [Guide to Treatment Medication](#)
- [In My Own Words](#)
- [Online Newsletter](#)
- [Anxiety in the Workplace](#)
- [Stats & Facts](#)
- [FAQs](#)

**Specific (Simple) Phobia**

Specific Phobia is characterized by the excessive fear of an object or a situation, exposure to which causes an anxious response, such as a Panic Attack. Adults with phobias recognize that their fear is excessive and unreasonable, but they are unable to control it. The feared object or situation is usually avoided or anticipated with dread.

Specific Phobia is diagnosed when an individual's fear interferes with their daily routine, employment (e.g., missing out on a promotion because of a fear of flying), social life (e.g., inability to go to crowded places), or if having the phobia is significantly distressful. The level of fear felt by the sufferer varies and can depend on the proximity of the feared object or chances of escape from the feared situation. If a fear is reasonable it cannot be classed as a phobia.

Specific Phobia may have its onset in childhood, and is often brought on by a traumatic event; being bitten by a dog, for example, may bring about a fear of dogs. Phobias that begin in childhood may disappear as the individual grows older. Fear of certain types of animals is the most common Specific Phobia. The disorder can be comorbid with Panic Disorder and Agoraphobia.

[Take a Specific Phobia Self-Test](#)  
[Find a Treatment Provider](#)

Anxiety Disorders Association of America  
8730 Georgia Avenue, Suite 600  
Silver Spring, MD 20910, USA  
Main # (240) 485-1001  
Fax # (240) 485-1035