# GENERALISED ANXIETY DISORDER



## WHAT IS IT?

Uncontrollable, worry about many events or thoughts. The person recognises them as inappropriate.

# **EPIDEMIOLOGY**

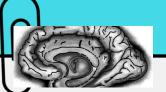
Twice as common in women.



## **AETIOLOGY**

Largely unknown.

Genetic factors. Dysfunction of ANS. Abnormal levels of neurotransmitters e.g. serotonin, noradrenaline. Environmental stressors. Learned behaviour.



#### SYMPTOMS

Worry (excessive, uncontrollable). Muscle tension. Difficulty concentrating. Fatigue. Restlessness. Disturbed sleep (difficulty getting to sleep, intermittent waking). Autonomic hyperactivity. Hyperventilation.



## SYMPTOMS CONT

Nausea Diarrhoea Fear of death/loss of control etc Derealisation Depersonalisation Feeling 'on-edge' Sensation of lump in throat



## RISK FACTORS

Family/personal history Childhood- pressure to achieve Personality type Low SES Stressful life events Chronic pain or illness Substance abuse history History of physical/emotional trauma



## DIAGNOSIS

Refer to ICD-10 and/or DSM-V criteria Consider factors increasing risk Consider withdrawal/ side-effects of medication GAD-7 questionnaire Consider other psychiatric comorbidities



## **DIFFERENTIALS**

Other anxiety disorders (panic, specific phobia, OCD, PTSD) Depression Schizophrenia Personality disorder e.g. Excessive caffeine/alcohol Organic



Bio-SSRIs, SNRI, pregabalin, benzodiazepines (short-term) Psycho- education, CBT Social-self-help, support groups, exercise

Treat comorbidities

