



Understanding Anxiety

Mental Health Support Team

Safe | Personal | Effective

What is Anxiety?

- Anxiety is a normal emotion that everyone will feel when we perceive that they are under threat.
- Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid.
- It's particularly common to experience some anxiety while coping with stressful events or changes, especially if they could have a big impact on your life.

Anxiety is a normal emotion that everyone feels at some point in their life.... This is because of something in our brains called the Fight, Flight or Freeze response.



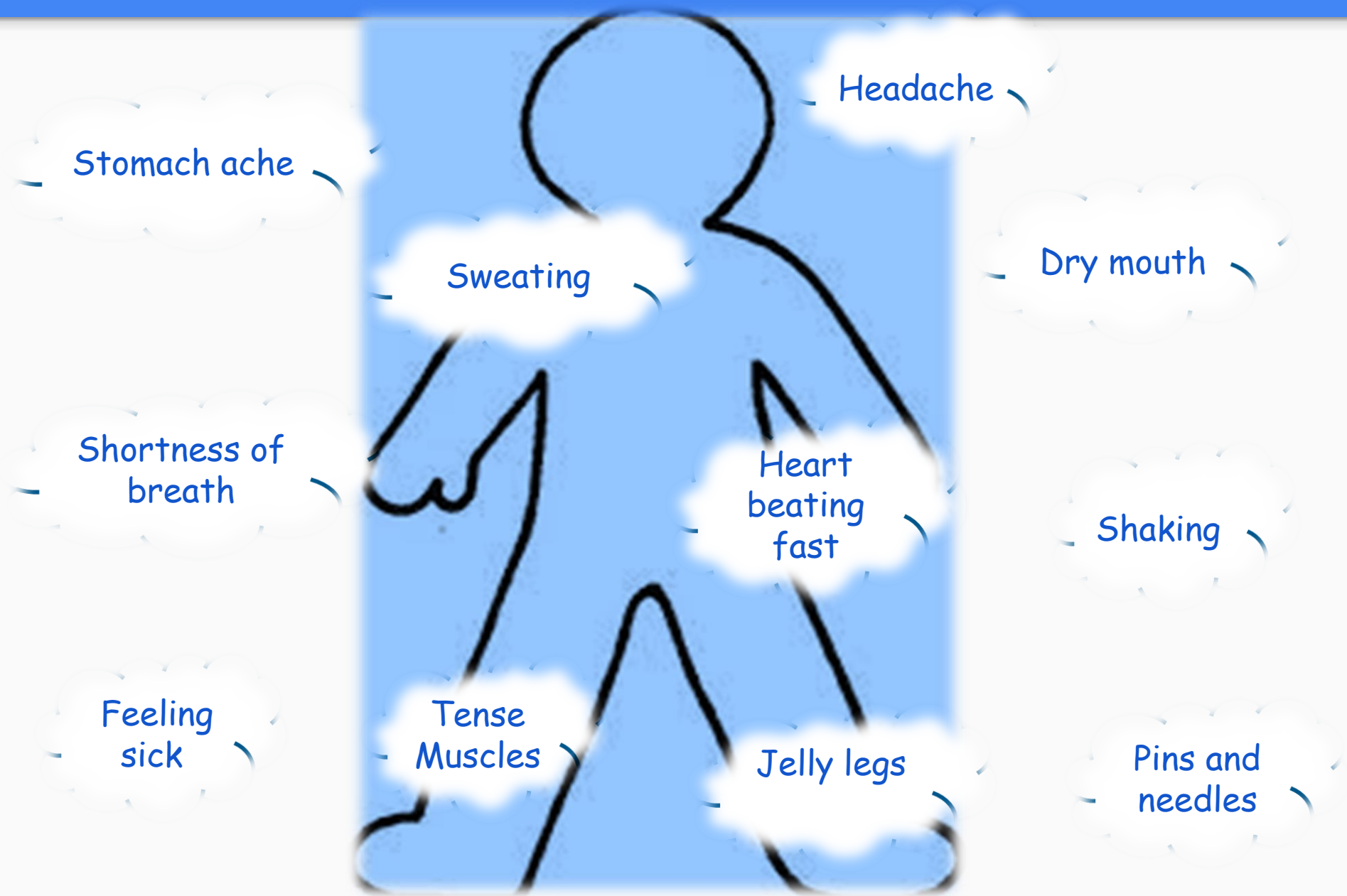
The Fight or Flight response meant prehistoric people's bodies went into survival mode whenever their brains sensed danger.

Even though we don't face the same dangers today, our brains and bodies still react in the same way to the things we see as dangerous, scary or worrying.

This means our increased heart rate and blood pressure causes us to feel anxious!



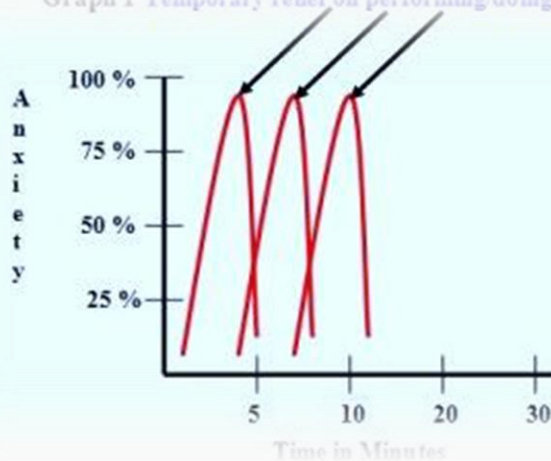
How my body tells me I'm anxious.



What Keeps Anxiety Going?

By avoiding or leaving a situation every time it makes us feel anxious, our body and brain is learning to fear that situation.

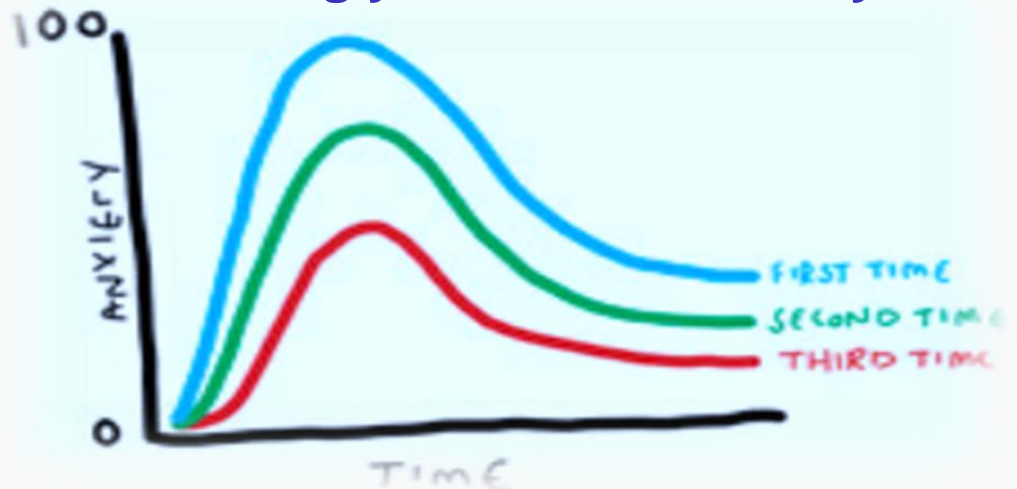
Graph 1 Temporary relief on performing/doing compulsions.



DID YOU KNOW?

It is impossible for our bodies to stay in an anxious state for longer than 90 minutes

By staying in the situation, you are teaching your brain and body that nothing bad will happen.



worry tree



Tips & Tricks

- Set yourself some goals - Start off small and slowly build your way up to the situation where you feel the most anxious.
- Getting regular exercise and eating a healthy/balanced diet helps to reduce anxiety.
- Doing things that we enjoy makes us feel good, and gives us time away from some of our negative thoughts or worry.

