

# Natural Help 4...

## Panic Attacks



### What are Panic Attacks?

[Panic attacks](#) can occur at any time of the day or night and are so disturbing that many people have been rushed to emergency medical centers, since panic attacks are often mistaken for heart attacks or seizures.

A [panic attack](#) is a **physiological response to fear or sudden anxiety**. The object of the fear can be either physical (like a spider) or an event (fear of flying, fear of heart attack or dying) or it can be to an imagined situation or event. For many sufferers [panic attacks](#) occur without an apparent trigger, they just 'happen' despite your efforts to curtail them, and this causes a great deal of distress and anxiety.

Many people who suffer from [panic attacks](#) would be surprised to hear that this is a **relatively common condition** generally affecting more women than men. Some people experience panic or anxiety attacks once or twice during times of stress, while others have a full blown Panic Disorder, experiencing [panic attacks](#) a few times a week, or even on a daily basis.

### Diagnosing Panic Attacks

Your health care practitioner will probably give you a **full physical exam** to rule out any underlying medical conditions such as heart problems or an overactive thyroid when diagnosing you for panic attacks.

Once these possibilities have been eliminated, your physician will ask you more about your [panic attacks](#). You will be asked when the symptoms started, how they manifest, when, where and how often they occur. Depending on the frequency of the attacks, you might be diagnosed with a Panic Disorder.

A Panic Disorder will only be diagnosed if there are **at least three [panic attacks](#) within a three week period** in reaction to situations that are not life threatening and which are not associated with physical exertion.

A [panic attack](#) is usually experienced as an intense feeling of fear.

Because of these intense and frightening feelings, many people experiencing [panic attacks](#) are seen in Emergency Hospital Rooms with suspected heart attacks. However, [panic attacks](#) are not known to affect the heart or precipitate a heart attack.

It is a good idea to seek help if you experience the symptoms of a panic attack. Because many of these **symptoms can mimic an underlying medical**

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**condition** it is important to have a health care professional perform a thorough physical examination to rule them out. If there is no underlying medical problem, rest assured that [panic attacks](#) can be managed, and that there are treatments!

## What Causes Panic Attacks?

A [panic attack](#) is a **series of physiological and chemical responses** caused when the brain 'misinterprets' a situation as life threatening. The body has a natural "flight or fight" alarm response to danger.

When faced with a life threatening situation, one may either stay put and face the danger (fight), or run away from the danger (flight). A [panic attack](#) happens when this feeling gets out of hand.

Sometimes it's the body's over-reaction to a feared situation, and other times there is no danger at all. There is no exclusive explanation for why this happens, but research suggests that **some people are genetically more predisposed to a physiological reaction to fear**, and therefore have an increased tendency to 'misinterpret' physical alarm signals.

## Symptoms of Panic Attacks

- A pounding heart and increased pulse rate
- Excessive sweating
- Trembling or shaking
- Feeling of choking
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Nausea
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness or feeling like you're going to faint
- Feelings of unreality or detachment
- Feelings of losing control or going *mad*
- Chills or hot flushes
- Fear of dying

## Help for Panic Attacks

There are a number of treatment options and coping techniques for panic attacks and it is important to explore which work best for you.

## Treatment Options for Panic Attacks

### Medical Treatments

Unfortunately many medical doctors have not been sufficiently trained in how to help people suffering from [panic attacks](#). The usual medical treatment involves reassuring the patient that he or she is 'fine' and prescribing strong anxiolytic medication, which is often extremely addictive with side effects that are sometimes more debilitating than the [panic attacks](#) themselves. It is important to recognize that [panic attacks](#) can be relatively easily treated without medication and then to refer these patients for treatment during the early stages of the problem. This would mean that there would be fewer people with chronic and severe forms of



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### Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

panic disorder and fewer dependent on strong drug therapy.

## **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CTB)**

This form of therapy is practised by psychologists and has been very successful in treating [Panic Attacks](#). By investigating and recognizing the thoughts and situations that ‘trigger’ the [panic attacks](#), strategies and coping mechanisms can be put into practice – at your own pace. Your therapist will provide you with ‘life tools’ and behavioural techniques to help you manage the [panic attacks](#) and prevent future ones. The more in control you feel, the less likely you will be to feel anxious – thereby further reducing the incidence and severity of [panic attacks](#)

## **Relaxation Techniques**

Meditation, yoga and deep breathing are some techniques that can be used to help control anxiety and lessen the stress that might be triggering the attacks. These can be very successfully taught by a psychologist and can also be learnt by using self-help books and CD’s composed by experts.

## **Natural Herbal and Homeopathic Remedies**

There are many **natural remedies for [panic attacks](#)** that may be used alone or in combination with therapy. Regular use of the correct remedy can **minimise anxiety and stress and improve overall mood** as well as preventing **[symptoms of panic attacks](#)**.

Lemon Balm, Lavender and Passiflora just are few recommended **natural remedies for [panic attacks](#)** that have had positive results in relieving **[symptoms of panic attacks](#)** and anxiety .

**Natural remedies for [panic attacks](#)** include regular use of St John’s Wort which has been shown to be very successful in increasing a sense of well-being and **reducing or even eliminating the occurrence and [symptoms of panic attacks](#)**. Discuss these options with your doctor or consult a homeopath or naturopath for advice.

## **Tips for Coping with Panic Attacks**

Even if you know what triggers your [panic attacks](#), try not to avoid the situation completely. Often we fear the unknown and by running away, the trigger itself can become larger than life and all-consuming.

Try to remember that you are not expected to rid yourself of [panic attacks](#) overnight. While it’s very easy for onlookers to simply say “Don’t panic, just relax and it will pass,” for the person suffering from [panic attacks](#), it is extremely hard to imagine the attack being over. Taking small steps (that you feel you can cope with) and very gradually increasing the demands on yourself can help facilitate a smooth transition back to a panic-free life.

If you are experiencing stress, whether in your relationships or at work, try and work on ways to improve or change the stressful circumstances – stress is a major precipitant of [Panic Attacks](#). Take steps to change the things that can be changed

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## **Great Health Sites**

[Naturally Beautiful Me](#)

[Natural Pet Health Blog](#)

[Natural Holistic Health](#)

[Mom's Blog](#)

[Health or High Water](#)

[Pet Herbal Info Blog](#)

[The Natural Beat Blog](#)

[PetAlive Natural & Herbal Remedies for Pets](#)

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and learn stress management techniques.

Make sure that you eat regular wholesome meals, have sufficient sleep and also exercise regularly – all important in the management of [Panic Attacks](#).

Avoid stimulants such as caffeine and CNS depressants, especially alcohol.

### **While Having a Panic Attack:**

- Try not to let your mind get the better of you by running away with negative thoughts of death, disaster or fainting. Try to focus on the thought that the “this too shall pass.” Try saying this out loud – remember if you can talk, it means you are still breathing!
- Slow down your breathing by closing your eyes, taking SLOW deep breaths and blowing each breath out through pursed lips. By keeping your hand on your stomach you will become more aware of your breathing.
- Don't concentrate too hard on the symptoms as this will only increase your anxiety. Try to simply 'let go' of the need to stop the attack and rather try to ride it out - getting yourself 'through' the worst of it until it passes.
- Keep in mind there is no actual danger in having a [panic attack](#). Reassure yourself that the fear of harm is only sustaining the attack and allowing it to last longer than necessary!

For more information, see our articles on Panic Disorder, Anxiety and Social Anxiety.

### **Are there other Disorders that May be Related to Panic Attacks?**

It is important to get a proper diagnosis as [panic attacks](#) can also occur in other disorders or conditions such as:

- Phobias
- Social anxiety
- Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Post-traumatic-stress disorder (PTSD)
- Depression
- Hyperthyroidism
- Mitral Valve Prolapse
- Hyperadrenocorticism (Cushings Disease)
- Drug withdrawal
- Side effects of prescription drugs
- Caffeine overdose

### **The Natural Approach**

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.



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Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is ‘better’ than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned on by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the body has an innate capacity to heal itself. While natural medicines are often called ‘alternative’ or ‘complimentary’ medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term ‘holistic’ medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine, which encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to support health (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer and that, in many cases, holistic medicine can accomplish just as much, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.

In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite frequent reports that they are ‘unproven’ and ‘untested’, the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way, following acceptable

### **Six Good Reasons to choose Native Remedies as your trusted suppliers of herbal & homeopathic remedies:**

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2) Native Remedies and our suppliers are registered with the FDA as accredited suppliers and manufacturers of health supplements. Our products are sold all over the world and are manufactured to strict international standards in a GMP accredited manufacturing plant.

3) All our remedies are manufactured in an FDA registered pharmaceutical facility under close supervision.

This includes formulation, acquiring and testing of raw ingredients as well as final manufacturing. This gives us the confidence to say that when you are buying a Native Remedies product, you are buying the safest and the best! We know what goes into our remedies - which is why we know what you will get out of them!

4) Manufacturing is done strictly according to the principles of GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) and all raw ingredients undergo stringent testing before being approved by our registered manufacturing pharmacists.

5) We offer a free email [Ask Our Experts](#) service run by trained consultants ready to advise you on the best choice for your health.

6) We offer an unconditional [One Year Money Back Guarantee](#).

procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called ‘standardized’ extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While ‘standardized’ extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have grave disadvantages. These include an increase in side effects as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life threatening condition, don’t make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health.

## **Related Natural Remedies:**

**MindSoothe**<sup>™</sup> : Promote balanced mood and feelings of wellbeing.

MindSoothe is a 100% safe, non-addictive, natural herbal remedy that has been especially formulated by a Clinical Psychologist for adults and teens, and comes in a compact capsule form, making it easy to take.

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PureCalm can be used to safely maintain harmony, health and systemic balance in the brain and nervous system, without harmful side effects and without sedatives. This remedy contains a selection of herbs known for their supportive function in maintaining brain.

PureCalm can especially benefit those individuals needing support overcoming worry, managing stress and to promote inner calm related to certain situations. Natural stress relief products such as PureCalm can be used consistently, without side effects or compromising health.

[Learn more about PureCalm](#)

**Nerve Tonic™** : Promotes nervous system health, maintains balanced mood and worry free mind.

Triple Complex Nerve Tonic is a combination of three, cell-supporting tissue salts, especially selected for their effect on brain and nervous system health. This combination of tissue salts can be used regularly in a general capacity to **promote systemic balance in the brain**, spinal cord and the entire nervous system, as well as in conjunction with other remedies to maintain therapeutic effectiveness.

Tissue Salts, also called cell salts or biochemic salts, are composed of **minerals that occur naturally at a cellular level in our bodies** and all organic matter on earth (plants, rocks and soil).

There have been **twelve essential tissue salts** identified as important components of all body cells and without which, true health is not possible. Each tissue salt plays a different, yet vital role in maintaining cellular health in the organs and **nervous systems** of the body.

Ensuring the healthy functioning of all brain and nervous system cells enhances the bio-availability of supplements, remedies and even nutrients in your diet. It also lessens the chance of a **nervous breakdown. Treating panic disorder** in people who suffer a **nervous breakdown** usually involves therapy. The doctor **treating panic disorder** will monitor the symptoms carefully to establish a treatment plan that aims to restore the health of the **nervous system**.

And, because our tissue salts are naturally occurring in the body and manufactured to ensure safe, yet optimum potency, they are safe to use for all ages, as well as during pregnancy.

[Learn more about Nerve Tonic](#)

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The Calm Within CD is composed by our Clinical Psychologist to promote good physical and emotional health using a specially developed therapeutic sound techniques and [soothing music](#).

A combination of therapeutic script and nature's [soothing sounds](#) induce a state of [deep relaxation](#), effectively relieving tension and supporting the body's natural ability to heal. In therapy with music that heals anxiety and depression such as

natures soothing sounds the listener is taken through a series of progressive relaxation steps, leading to a state of deep relaxation. Thereafter guided imagery is used to further enhance and expand therapeutic benefits.

[Learn more about the Calm Within CD](#)

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