

## Fear of Death

**Thanatophobia** is commonly referred to as the fear of death. More specifically, it can be a fear of death or a fear of the dying process. It is natural for someone to worry about their own health as they age. It is also common for someone to worry about their friends and family after they are gone.

Particular triggers for thanatophobia could include an early traumatic event related to almost dying or the death of a loved one. A person who has a severe illness may experience thanatophobia because they are anxious about dying, though ill health is not necessary for a person to experience this anxiety.

Most people generally experience some level of discomfort or anxiety when confronted with the reality of human mortality in a dying/death situation such as in a hospital, home, or hospice during the dying process or during a funeral, memorial, or interment service after a loved one dies. This uneasiness does *not* generally constitute thanatophobia (although this term is sometimes misapplied in these instances).

Death anxiety symptoms:

- Intense fear or anxiety whenever you think about death
- Thinking or worrying about it on a daily basis
- Avoiding situations where you think you might have to think or talk about it
- Physical symptoms when thinking about death – heart palpitations, sweating, tummy pains, nausea etc.
- Difficulties sleeping
- Fearing the worst every time you come down with something or spending hours symptom-searching on the internet. (Health anxiety and death anxiety frequently come together – both linked to control and a difficulty with tolerating uncertainty).

The **Death Anxiety** worksheet will help you in assessing the severity of your anxiety level so that you can control it accordingly. It will also allow you to give you awareness about your anxious behaviour which can be helpful to reduce your death anxiety.

### Resources:

*Death Anxiety Worksheet*

### **What to know about the fear of death**

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/321939#causes-and-types>

### **Fear of death in children**

<https://www.verywellmind.com/fear-of-death-in-children-2671783>

### **Why am I so scared of death lately?**

<https://myonlinetherapy.com/why-am-i-so-scared-of-death-lately/>