MENTAL HEALTH

No need to panic over attacks

PANIC is a feeling that most of us are familiar with. The “fight or flight” response helps us to react quickly in dangerous situations. For people who have Panic Disorder however, attacks may occur in situations that are not life-threatening – and can be seen as our body producing a ‘false alarm’.

This overwhelming anxiety appears to occur ‘out of the blue’. Often the person worries about the symptoms of panic attacks (heart pounding, shortness of breath, dizziness, trembling), fearing the symptoms are a sign that there is something seriously wrong with them physically or mentally. Individuals will try and reduce the chances of having a panic attack by avoiding situations where escape may be difficult or help may not be available.

The avoidance of these situations is known as Agoraphobia. The aim of cognitive behavioural treatment is to help people overcome their fear of panic.

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