

Needle Phobia Manifestations Suggested Causes and Treatments

Needle Phobia Type	Primary Symptoms	Patient fears...	Cause	Reference	Treatment Strategy	Therapy	Prevalence % population
Vaso-Vagal	Fainting , sweating, nausea, initially high blood pressure and heart rate, followed by a sudden precipitous plunge in blood pressure; patient tends to react passively	the thought, sight or feeling of needle-like objects (and sometimes blood also).	Inherited Reflex	Hamilton	Desensitization	Progressive exposure techniques; avoid visual exposure, provide anesthesia so patient cannot feel needle.	Proportion of needle phobes 5% about half of all needle phobes
Associative	Extreme unexplained anxiety , difficulty sleeping and preoccupation with approaching procedure.	sub-consciously associated traumatic event . This includes fear transferred from parents or siblings who exhibit intense negative reactions to needle/medical procedures.	Emotional trauma (usually in childhood) associated with a medical/needle procedure		De-link needle procedures from the underlying associated fear.	Cognitive therapy, hypnosis, NLP, etc. Anti-anxiety medications may be helpful.	3% 3 out of every 10 needle phobes
Resistive	Combattiveness high heart rate and <i>high</i> blood pressure, violent resistance, avoidance and flight	being controlled .	Repressive upbringing, poor handling of prior procedures (forced with physical or emotional abuse)	Trijsburg, et. al.	Put the patient in control	Psychotherapy, teach patient self-injection techniques; find trusted provider	2% 2 out of every 10 needle phobes
Hyperalgesic	Extreme explained anxiety and elevated blood pressure and heart rate at the immediate point of needle penetration or seconds before.	pain . These patients cannot understand how anyone can tolerate needle procedures and they are therefore quite aware of exactly why they dread such procedures	Inherited pain sensitivity	Uhl, et. al. Leutwyler Zubietar	Provide pain relief	Anesthesia, topical or general	1% 1 out of every 10 needle phobes