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To: Boris Nikolic

Propranolol - from devastating anxiety to calm in 1 day

Posted over a year ago

Hi, I am a 36 year old professional male and for the past 3 months I've been suffering with anxiety attacks. I thought the anxiety feelings of panic was actually brought on by low blood sugar but my blood tests came back fine and at that point I realised my issues were linked to anxiety. I am usually a confident person and only ever experienced anxiety when presenting to large groups at work, basically I could feel my heart racing and had an urgent need to leave the room (flight response), I could hold my ground and get through it but it was the worst feeling in the world. Other than presentations I would usually be 100% confident, I go on dates or even interviews with no anxiety but recently I can get the same anxious feelings by just meeting a friend for dinner or taking a phone call. I have had some issues in my personal life which I think have brought these on and also my work has been very quiet lately so I have been pretty isolated - a "big deal" used to be a work presentation and now its just a meeting or even seeing a friend.

<=>My anxiety could range from feeling uncomfortable and uneasy through to a medium panic attack. During a panic attack I can sit there and function but I feel dreadful and its so difficult to articulate myself, I just feel like running out the room. I could spend the weekend with family and my girlfriend and be fine, then head for dinner the same day, with the same people and feel anxious in the restaurant.

My GP prescribed Propranolol, 40mg to take before anxious situations or twice a day, whichever I felt comfortable with. I had been feeling dreadful that week, had a couple of anxiety attacks and had been extremely restless and unhappy, my sleep was heavily disturbed too and I couldn't eat. I had lost a stone over the past few months, mainly from loss of appetite and from not drinking (due to this making everything worse the following day).

I took a 40mg tab that evening, 2 hours before going out. Within an hour I felt so relaxed, I literally felt like my worries and anxiety was releasing from my body. That evening I had planned to go to the cinema, the building was packed and there was stress getting a ticket. I had felt anxious about this earlier that day (before taking my first Propranolol) but when I arrived I felt in control. I was chatty to the people behind, we got our tickets and I really enjoyed the film - previously I have felt trapped by being in the cinema around lots of people.

I didn't sleep very well that night but the following day I felt fine, I took a tablet with breakfast and headed to work. Certain situations which would cause my anxiety to rise just didn't phase me all day long, I was proactive to try to provoke situations that could cause me to be anxious and nothing happened. I ended up heading to the shops after work and then to visit family at 7pm, by the evening I could feel that the Propranolol was wearing off and I did feel slightly anxious and it was more difficult to talk to family members.

I still need to test the Propranolol during more stressful situations but so far I have been amazed with how effective this drug is. I still feel a little down but my worrying thoughts do not spiral out of control as they used to. When confronted with a tense situation my body just holds its ground like it used to and I seem to be able to get through anything now. I get a little tingling feeling, as if my body is trying to make me feel anxious, but it just gets no momentum and this then gives me confidence to continue. Propranolol is such an amazing drug.

Side effects wise I have had disturbed sleep and a slight aching round by my kidneys. No sweating, sexual disfunction, irritability etc - everything feels fine. I actually didn't take a tablet last night and slept really=20 well but I did feel anxious for an hour this morning until the tablet kicked in. I think I am going to take it twice daily to have some regularity and make sure I take this early enough for it to kick in before my first meeting each day.

I realise that Propranolol isn't fixing the root issue and I plan to have counciling i= the next few weeks (GP is sorting that out). I do think that Propranolol has enabled me to get my life back on track, I can go to work, see friends and lead a normal life whereas just a week ago I was thinking I'd have to give up work and possibly move back in with my parents for them to look after me, that seems crazy now looking back.

That's me story, I will come back and add updates - a=yone else

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