

HELPING YOUR CHILD THRU A PANIC ATTACK OR HIGH ANXIETY

CHILD SAYS:	HELPFUL PARENT RESPONSE:
What is wrong with me? This shouldn't be happening!	It seems that something is wrong and this feeling is very uncomfortable but you are not in danger; your body is responding to anxiety & it's a false alarm. This is a bodily sensation just like others you have. Nothing has changed at all and this feeling will end on its own even if you do nothing about it.
What is happening to me?	You are safe. This is a panic attack/anxiety. It is harmless and it will go away.
I feel that I am going to die. I can't breathe.	I know it feels like that but you are safe. This is harmless. It can't hurt you. This is actually your body protecting you if you were in danger. Your body has gotten a false alarm: your brain sent the wrong signal. You will not die, faint or throw up – this is anxiety.
What if this means I'm going crazy?	You feel like you are going crazy, but you aren't. Everything you are experiencing is normal. These are signs of anxiety, not signs of trouble. You are ok. Nothing is wrong with you – this is anxiety.
What if people can't help me?	Let's work on slowing your body down together so you'll know what to do. This is like an ocean wave and it will come down on its own. There's no danger, it just can feel very uncomfortable.
What if I faint or suffocate?	When you breathe slowly, you'll reset your system. Your body will get a new signal and everything will go back to normal. Let's do it now. No one ever dies from anxiety. It's not comfortable, but it can't hurt you. These feelings will pass. Don't add to them with your fear. Don't fuel the fire – put it out! It's a false alarm.
What if I have to go to the hospital?	Anxiety is harmless. Nothing is actually wrong with you. There is no need to do anything but accept this feeling, breath thru it and it will decrease.
What if this time is different? What if it's real this time?	It's always the same. That's just more panic thinking. You are fine and when you keep thinking calmly, these feelings will pass.