

## Phobias

1. It is estimated that \_\_\_\_\_ of people suffer from some kind of phobia.
  - a) 5%
  - b) 10%
  - c) 20%
  
2. Claustrophobia is the fear of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) heights
  - b) enclosed spaces
  - c) the dark
  
3. The fear of spiders is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) spidiophobia
  - b) tarantophobia
  - c) arachnophobia
  
4. Which of the following is a recognised phobia?
  - a) peladophobia – fear of bald people
  - b) professophobia – fear of teachers
  - c) rosophobia – fear of the colour pink
  
5. Which of the following is *not* a recognised phobia?
  - a) panophobia – fear of bread
  - b) bibliophobia – fear of books
  - c) technophobia – fear of technology
  
6. A British woman has a highly unusual phobia that prevents her from going to certain places where food is served. What do you think she is afraid of?
  - a) plates
  - b) pepper
  - c) peas
  
7. Which of the following is sometimes used to treat people suffering from phobias?
  - a) hypnosis
  - b) hot baths
  - c) loud music
  
8. What is ergophobia?
  - a) fear of travel
  - b) fear of work
  - c) fear of open spaces

## Phobias

Approximately 10% of people suffer from some kind of phobia, which is the word used to describe an extreme fear of a particular thing or situation, especially when the fear doesn't seem to have any rational explanation.

The most common phobias include claustrophobia (fear of enclosed spaces), agoraphobia (fear of the outdoors and open spaces), arachnophobia (fear of spiders), glossophobia (fear of public speaking) and batophobia (fear of heights).

There are literally hundreds of recognised phobias, some of which might sound quite bizarre: for example there is bibliophobia (fear of books), technophobia (fear of technology), and even peladophobia (fear of bald people).

One of the strangest cases is that of the 35-year-old British woman Louise Arnold, who finds that she has to avoid restaurants and the frozen-foods section of supermarkets. Why? Because of her fear of ... peas. Other people might see peas as a small and unthreatening vegetable, but Mrs Arnold can't stand being in the same room as them.

Mrs Arnold's phobia is due to be the subject of a British TV programme: she is going to be filmed as she tries different types of therapy, including hypnosis and acupuncture, in an attempt to cure her of her unusual fear.

However, some of Mrs Arnold's friends appear to see a funny side to her condition: they bought her a T-shirt with the message 'Give Peas a Chance' on the front.

Mrs Arnold's friends aren't alone in making jokes about the subject of unusual phobias. For example, when someone is seen as being lazy, you've probably heard people suggest that he or she is 'afraid of work'. Well, as you might have guessed by now, that's a condition that really does exist – it's called ergophobia.