

Public nervousness may be stress disorder

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Research by a Japanese pharmaceutical firm suggests 30 percent of people who become nervous in public settings might be suffering from a stress disorder.

Individuals who become nervous when they appear in front of a large group of people may be suffering a mental illness called social anxiety disorder, or SAD, the Mainichi news service reported Thursday, noting more than 3 million people are estimated to be suffering from the illness in Japan.

Tokyo-based Astellas Pharma Inc. surveyed 614 people aged 16 to 49 across Japan via the Internet about whether they become nervous when they make public speeches or attend parties. Of those surveyed, 283 responded in the affirmative. When asked whether they show typical SAD symptoms, 82 percent said they do.

But the vast majority, 381 of 411 people who responded to the question, said they would not seek treatment, Mainichi reported. Most of those people said they don't regard SAD as an illness or they believe it is caused by individual personality problems.

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