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*Relax and
Enjoy Your
Golf Game*

There's nothing to fear when it comes to golf

[Dr. Andy Dombro](#)

Sam Snead said, "Of all the hazards in golf, fear is the worst." While Snead was likely referring to winning tournaments, fear also inhibits your enjoyment of golf. Moreover, it can adversely affect your overall health. Fortunately, by understanding fear you can control it.

Feature content

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In your mind and body, the fear of hitting a bad golf shot is similar to that of being chased by a tiger. Both cause your adrenal glands to release adrenalin, triggering the "fight or flight" response. Anxiety increases, and blood flows more to your big muscles than to the smaller

ones used for "touch" -- useful when running from a tiger, but not in golf. Fear leads to poor decision-making and bad shots (including the dreaded "yips"). The result -- less enjoyment.

But therein lies the solution. If enjoyment becomes the goal, you are less attached to where the ball goes, and fear and anxiety are minimized. You'll feel more relaxed -- and the ball is more likely to go where intended. Have you heard pros, after winning a tournament, say they just tried "to have fun" and to "stay out of their own way?"

Remember -- keep it in perspective -- it's just golf!

Tips:

- Fear of a particular shot often produces the exact result you fear, so don't take your shot until you've eliminated negative thoughts. You can even switch to a 3-wood or iron for certain tee shots - shorter on the fairway beats OB every time.
- Fear has both physical and mental affects, causing both poor shot making and poor decisions. Preparation to prevent it begins off the course, by learning relaxation techniques and gaining proper perspective.
- Fear is often associated with hitting poor shots or shooting high scores. If you make enjoyment of the game, camaraderie and swinging smoothly your goal, you'll likely find that the score will take care of itself. The "yips" are a mental hazard, and based in fear. Realizing this and focusing on making a good stroke on the intended line, whether or not the ball goes in the hole, will help "cure" them.

POLL

In a typical year, what percent of your golf games would you consider to be "low pressure"?

- Zero
- 1 to 10%
- 11 to 25%
- 26 to 50%
- 51 to 99%
- 100%