



Clockwise from left: Puteri Shehnaz Majid fears butterflies and moths; a fear of bridges is called gephyrophobia; Adian Khalid's phobia stems from a run-in with some transvestites; Nurfadilla Karim fears a flower will one day swallow her up. — AFP, ADIAN KHALID & NURFADILLA KARIM

"My sister shoved a soft toy flower in my face once and I panicked and started to cry. She shoved a plastic flower in my face when we were shopping at Ikea, and I screamed like a little girl, causing everyone to stare. These incidents are very recent, mind you.

"My brother played a trick on me when I visited him in Abu Dhabi. He placed a huge basket of sprouting onions in the cupboard and told me to get the bread from there. I freaked out when I opened the cupboard and saw those repulsive things. I still get goose bumps thinking about it."

Fear of live chickens Desi Bandal, 25, public relations practitioner

"I have this fear of live chickens. I'm scared of their feathers, cockscomb and feet. I'm not sure how the fear came about, but it must have been when someone once, as a sick joke, scared me with slaughtered chicken heads on a skewer.

"I freak out if live chickens come near me now.

"It's irrational but I'm thinking that if a dog attacks me, I can use my hands to turn its head away from me so it wouldn't be able to bite me. But if a chicken flies and attacks me — what am I supposed to do then? It's not likely; it's only hypothetical. But what if a crazy chicken were to attack me? What if?!"

Fear of germs Ng Li Fern, 33, magazine editor

"When I was in secondary school, we



conducted a water filtration experiment for a Human Biology and Community class, where we had to determine the amount of bacteria at each level of filtration.

"The experiment didn't work out so well since one of my friends contaminated the water with a seemingly clean-looking sponge towards the end. It was all very funny when we got the results, but after that I started washing my hands with soap every time I touched something I thought could be dirty.

"I started to wash my hands with soap after I did the dishes because I wasn't sure the sponge or sink was clean. I scrubbed my hands if I touched a damp surface because I wasn't sure it didn't have germs. I wanted to wash my hands after borrowing someone else's pen because their hands could have been dirty.

"After a while, to ensure my hands were really clean after I washed them, I washed the tap with hand soap before I washed my own hands so that I could be sure of touching a clean tap when I turned off the water.



"By this stage my hands started to feel dry all the time, and one day while washing the tap at home, I realised the situation had become ridiculous and so I made an effort to stop. Thankfully, I'm not so anal now but I do get frustrated if there's no soap to wash my hands when I need to. I can't just rinse them with water and move on because I know it doesn't kill germs at all!

"If anything, the dampness will help them proliferate. That said, I'm OK with dust."

Fear of transvestites Adian Khalid, 35, general manager (above)

"I have a deep phobia of transvestites. I'm not homophobic. Gay men are fine by me but I'm terrified of men who dress like girls or who have had surgery to look like one. Here's my story.

"We used to hit the town, especially around the Beach Club area, back in the 90s. Anyway, the parking lot beside the old Emporium was a hive for transvestites and, it being about 2am on a Sunday night, the car park was quite empty.

"As I approached my car, I was hassled by a few of them who said things like *"Hi Dik, nak manja-manja tak?"* and *"Hey baby, you hensem la."*

"I graciously thwarted their 'advances' but as I was alone, more of them started converging around me. I tried to remain calm and cool, and walked briskly towards my car, probably one of only four cars in the dark car park that night. There were a few of them hanging around my car as well.

"As I got to the car, I pulled out my remote and clicked it.

"Tweeit-tweiii and ALL the doors unlocked, as they do when you press a remote. That simple, innocent action was one of the dumbest things I've ever done in my whole life.

"*Carpe diem!* They seized the moment! As I got in, one quickly popped into the passenger seat, another sat on my doorsill, hindering my efforts to pull it close and four others hopped into the back and shut the doors. The next thing I know, I had hands rubbing me all over! Flashes from my short, pathetic, but joyful life flew by. I thought this was the end...

"I did put up a fight, mind you, but, darn it, they had the strength of Samson! Must be the long hair.

"I recall saying, 'Look! I'm straight, I'm not interested! *Saya tak nak, saya tak nak!*' It's funny now, but it was really scary at the time.

"It was over as quickly as it had started. They suddenly decided they'd had enough of harassing me and got out and closed the doors. I started the engine, jammed the car into first gear and floored it out of the car park, back to the safety of Jalan Sultan Ismail. The harrowing ordeal was over, and I had survived.

"So, to this very day, I go stiff whenever a cross-dresser gets within 500m of me. My wife works in TV and I hate it when I have to face some of her she-male make-up artists. Maybe I'll get over it but for now, I would not want to be left alone in a room with them."

Other weird phobias taken from <http://b3ta.com/questions/irrational-fears/>

Fear of knees geetoo

"My flatmate doesn't like knees. He thinks they're wrong. He worries that the femur will slip off the lower leg bone. Think about your knees. What are they doing? Are their little cartilage surfaces floating over each other? Rubbing away. Rubbing away. One false move, and out pops your femur."

Fear of crossing bridges kaydup

"I've recently developed gephyrophobia. It's quite unnerving to cross a bridge and I have to physically stop myself from jumping over the side by walking in the middle of the road to stay as far away from the edges as possible. I nearly got run down by a car. I crawled on the floor along the road to cross the bridge. I wasn't drunk. I was very frightened."

Fear of closing the curtains mike

"I hate drawing the curtains when it's dark outside and I can see my reflection in the glass. This is because I have a fear of seeing a movement reflected behind me or seeing someone outside my window. Somehow, I have no qualms about leaving the windows open."

Fear of edges Wortal Mombat

"I'm afraid that I'll hurl myself over the edge of something very high up one day just to see 'what happens'. Will I fall? Will I stay afloat? Will the world let me die? Am I really so insignificant? It stems from childhood. I'm drawn to the edge, any edge... lakes, ponds, tables, cliffs, mostly high cliffs... the finality of gravity is something not to ponder when one is drunk. Wondering 'What will happen if...?' is my greatest fear. Thinking too much is my second greatest fear because it creates my first."

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All you need to know about stretch marks

Stretch marks happen when your skin's natural collagen and elastin fibers are pulled by rapid growth or stretching. Weight gain, pregnancy or sudden weight loss can cause unsightly stretch marks especially around the abdomen, breasts, hips, thighs and butt.



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All you need to reduce stretch marks

Revolutionary PALMER'S Cocoa Butter Formula Stretch Marks Massage Lotion and Cream is ideal to soothe and reduce those unsightly stretch marks.

Enriched with active ingredients such as:

Cocoa Butter - Provides superior moisturising properties and helps skin retain moisture

Vitamin E - A natural antioxidant to protect skin against harsh elements

Collagen & Elastin - Improves skin elasticity and firmness. Enhances overall skin tone

Shea Butter - Helps reduce stretch marks, dark spots, and dry, dull skin (Used in Stretch Marks Massage Lotion)



Stretch Marks Massage **Lotion** is a light moisturiser to gently moisturise areas prone to stretching. This prepares the skin for less severe stretch marks.

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Stretch Marks Massage **Cream** is a more concentrated and intense cream to moisturise, relieve dryness and improve overall skin tone. Continue usage 6 months after delivery to help skin regeneration.

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