

Editorial on Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

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Editorial

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is a chronic mental health condition that is characterized by obsessions which leads to distressing, intrusive, obsessive thoughts and repetitive, compulsive physical or mental acts. Approximately 2% of the population have OCD [1].

A person with OCD typically: does not want to have these intrusive thoughts and feelings, spends a lot of time focusing on these obsessions and engaging in compulsions, which interferes with personal, social, and professional activities, experiences a significant amount of discomfort, possibly involving fear, disgust, doubt, or a conviction that things must be done in a certain way, has thoughts, images, or urges that they feel unable to control [2].

OCD Types

Fears of Contamination/Washers: They are afraid of contamination. They usually have cleaning or hand-washing compulsions.

Concern with checking: Checkers repeatedly check things (oven turned off, door locked, etc.) that they associate with harm or danger.

Doubters: They are afraid that if everything isn't perfect or done just right something terrible will happen, or they will be punished.

Counters: They are obsessed with order and symmetry.

Hoarders: Hoarders fear that something bad will happen if they throw anything away. Hoarders may also suffer from other disorders, such as depression, PTSD, compulsive buying, kleptomania, ADHD, skin picking, or tic disorders [3].

Symptoms

OCD involves obsessions, compulsions, or both.

Obsessions: While everyone worries, in people with OCD, worries and anxiety can take over, making it hard to carry out everyday tasks, these are upsetting thoughts or impulses that repeatedly occur. Worries about yourself or other people getting hurt, Suspicion that a partner is unfaithful, with no reason to believe it, Constant awareness of blinking, breathing, or other body sensations [4].

Compulsions: Not every repetitive behavior is a compulsion. Many people use repetitive behaviors, such as bedtime routines, to help them manage everyday life.

For a person with OCD, however, the need to perform repetitious behavior is intense. Completing tasks in a specific order every time or a certain "good" number of times, Needing to count things, like steps or bottles, Fear of touching doorknobs, using public toilets, or shaking hands, washing and cleaning, including handwashing, monitoring the body for symptoms, repeating routine activities, such as getting up from a chair and mental compulsions, such as repeatedly reviewing an event.

Health care providers do not know do not know what causes OCD, but there are various theories. Neurological, genetic, behavioral, cognitive, and environmental factors may all contribute [4,5].

Diagnosis

Steps to help diagnose obsessive-compulsive disorder may include: Psychological evaluation, Diagnostic criteria for OCD and Physical exam.

Treatment

OCD treatment may not result in a cure, but it can help bring symptoms under control so that they don't rule your daily life.

Psychotherapy (Cognitive behavioral therapy), Medications, Intensive outpatient and residential treatment programs, Deep brain stimulation, Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS).

Lifestyle and home remedies: Practice what you learn, Take your medications as directed, Pay attention to warning signs and Check first before taking other medications.

Coping and support: Learn about OCD, Stay focused on your goals, Join a support group, Find healthy outlets, Learn relaxation and stress management, Stick with your regular activities [6].

References

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