



Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)



Overview

This is an anxiety disorder. It can cause unwanted thoughts and behaviors that you can't control. They can be troubling. They can interfere with your life.

Causes and Risk Factors

We don't know why OCD develops. It can affect people of all ages. Most people who have it are diagnosed by age 19. Your risk is higher if you have a family member with OCD. It's also more common in people who have been abused.

Obsessions

With OCD, you may have recurring thoughts that cause anxiety. We call these "obsessions." You may have obsessions about germs and cleanliness. You may have a strong desire for things around you to be arranged neatly and perfectly. You may think about harming yourself or other people. And you may have troubling thoughts about sex, religion or violence.

Compulsions

OCD can also make you feel the need to do certain actions over and over again. We call these "compulsions." Your compulsive behaviors may include frequent hand washing and cleaning. You may arrange and rearrange things. You may check things, like door locks, again and again. And, you may feel the constant need to count.

Other Symptoms

Some people with OCD may feel uncontrollable urges to make certain movements or sounds. We call this a "tic." If you have a tic, you may blink your eyes frequently. You may make a certain facial expression, or you may jerk your head or shoulders. You may constantly sniff, clear your throat or make grunting sounds.

Treatment

OCD can be treated with medications. It can also be treated with talk therapy, which can help you learn to control compulsive behaviors. Your healthcare provider can create a plan that's right for you.

Actor portrayals in photos

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