

8. Therapy can also be used to treat OCD.

- ✓ With behavioral therapy, people with OCD learn to resist compulsive urges. They learn better ways to cope with fear and stress.



9. Family and friends can help.

- ✓ It is important to understand that OCD is an illness.
- ✓ Friends and family can offer ongoing encouragement.
- ✓ With the help of a therapist, family and friends may need to learn to resist going along with the rituals – even if they have gone along with them before.
- ✓ Be patient. Healing takes time. A calm and supportive approach is often the best way to help.

10. For more information:

- ✓ Talk with your health care provider or contact your local mental health services.
- ✓ Visit these websites:
 - National Institute of Mental Health www.nimh.nih.gov
 - National Alliance on Mental Illness www.nami.org
 - Mental Health America www.mentalhealthamerica.net
- ✓ If you are in crisis or afraid you may hurt yourself, call 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

Sage Counseling Service
Adrian College
110 S. Madison Street
Adrian, Michigan 49221
265-5161 Ext. 4518

This pamphlet is not a substitute for medical care.
If you have questions or concerns, please talk with
a health care provider.

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UNDERSTANDING MENTAL ILLNESS

10 Things Everyone Should Know About Obsessive- Compulsive Disorder



GET THE FACTS

10 THINGS EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

More than 3 million people in the U.S. have a condition called obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). People with OCD suffer from repetitive thoughts and behaviors. While everyone has routines and habits in their daily lives, people with OCD may be controlled by these routines. With treatment, most people with OCD can be helped.

1. Obsessive-compulsive disorder is an anxiety disorder.

- ✓ OCD is a type of mental illness.
- ✓ Many people with OCD know that their thoughts and behavior do not make sense, but they cannot stop them.
- ✓ OCD can be mild or severe. Severe OCD can be disabling, affecting a person's ability to work and have relationships.



2. People with OCD have repeated, upsetting thoughts.

- ✓ These thoughts are called "obsessions."
- ✓ People can be obsessed with germs, the order in which things are done, a fear of being hurt, or many other things.



3. To try to make the thoughts go away, people with OCD do the same things again and again.

- ✓ These actions are called "compulsions."
- ✓ Constantly counting, washing hands and checking on things (such as making sure the stove is turned off) are examples of compulsions.
- ✓ These actions are attempts to relieve the anxiety and panic of OCD.

4. OCD affects both men and women.

- ✓ For many people, OCD begins in childhood or the teenage years.
- ✓ OCD may run in families.

5. The symptoms of OCD vary.

- ✓ Symptoms may come and go.
- ✓ People with OCD may try to help themselves by avoiding situations that trigger their obsessions. They may abuse alcohol or drugs to calm themselves.
- ✓ Many people with OCD are embarrassed by their illness. They may try to hide their symptoms from others.
- ✓ It takes courage for a person with OCD to seek help.

6. OCD may result from changes in the brain.

- ✓ Scientists believe there is a link between OCD and a brain chemical called serotonin.
- ✓ People with OCD may also suffer from other forms of anxiety or depression.



7. Several medicines are available to help treat OCD.

- ✓ Many people with OCD can get relief from medication.
- ✓ It may take several weeks for medication to start to work and to see an improvement in behavior.