

Psychological Disorders
Chapter 6
Anxiety and Obsessive Compulsive Disorders

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Outline/overview

- Specific phobia
- Social anxiety disorder (Social phobia)
- Panic disorder
- Agoraphobia
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Treatments

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Specific phobia

- marked fear or anxiety about a specific object or situation
- avoided or endured with intense anxiety
- interferes significantly with functioning

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Specific phobia (cont.)

● Common phobias

- animals
- heights
- confinement
- injury and/or blood

● Epidemiology

- point prevalence about 10% (avg. over 4 samples)
- lifetime prevalence approx. 14% (6-23%)
- Text: > 12% lifetime

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Specific Phobia (cont.)

- rarely seek treatment
- some genetic predisposition
- somehow "hardwired" to fear certain objects
- estimated lifetime prevalence: animal 11%, blood/inj. 3-6%, situational 12%
- Gender differences?
- clear familial influences
- familial influences - positive correlations between children and mothers
- higher concordance between MZ than DZ twins
- treatments - exposure / systematic desensitization

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Social Anxiety Disorder (Social Phobia)

- fear of social or performance situations
- subject to evaluation by others
- fear - will embarrass or humiliate self
- prevalence - 12 mo. prev. as high as 8%, 3/2 ♀/♂
- lifetime prevalence 2-19% across studies
- Text: 7% 1 yr & 12% lifetime incidence
- alcohol use/abuse may be problem
- no evidence of genetic component

- diathesis-stress "in action" – GABA functioning

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Panic disorder

- recurrent, unexpected panic attacks
- panic attack - discrete period of intense fear or discomfort not tied to a phobic stimuli
- 4 of 13 symptoms - palpitations/increased heart rate, sweating, shortness of breath, choking sensation, chest pain, nausea, fear of dying
- One month or more of:
 - persistent concern about additional attacks or worries about consequences of attacks
 - significant maladaptive changes in behavior or functioning

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Agoraphobia

- marked, or intense, fear or anxiety triggered by the real or anticipated exposure to a wide range of situations: public transportation, being in open spaces, being in enclosed spaces, standing in line or being in a crowd, or being outside of home alone
- believe that escape might be difficult or help might be unavailable when panic-like symptoms occur
- persistent – typically > 6 mos

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Panic disorder and agoraphobia

- Prevalence-about 1.6% of population has panic attacks
- about 4% agoraphobia
- Panic Disorder – point about 0.5%-2.3%, lifetime 5%
- 24% have comorbid depressive disorder
- biological mechanisms
- genetic component 9.3% of relatives also have panic disorder, 1.3% of relatives of social phobics, 0% of nonpatient controls
- higher MZ concordance
- assess alcohol abuse
- Case example - Steve: video

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Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

- excessive or unrealistic anxiety and worry
- 6 mos. or more
- more “worrying days” than good
- worry is central theme in GAD
- poor diagnostic reliability
- not easily distinguished from other anxiety disorders

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GAD (cont.)

- many depressed also meet GAD criteria
- prevalence-common in general population
- rarely seek mental health treatment
- see FMD’s for feeling “keyed up” “edgy”
- 2-1 fem/male – 5% lifetime/1.6% point
- early studies = no evidence of genetic component, heritability now estimated at about 30% - shared with major depression

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Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- recurrent obsessions or compulsions
- cause marked distress, take > 1 hr./day
- Obsessions - repetitive, recurring thoughts, ideas, images, or impulses experienced as intrusive
 - In DSM-IV had to be recognized as unreasonable
- Compulsions - repetitive, purposeful behaviors, performed rigidly, according to certain rules
- insight - 1. good or fair, 2. poor, or 3. absent insight/delusional beliefs

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OCD (cont.)

- Prevalence - once thought very rare (about 0.5%) some data suggests 2% - 1yr
- Text - lifetime prevalence rate of 2.5%
- 80% both obsessions and compulsions
- comorbidity - 75% also meet criteria for major depressive disorder
- 10-35% of depressed have obsessions
- seems to have a genetic component
- case example - Chuck: video

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Trauma/Stress & Anxiety disorders treatment

- not much long term research
- knowledge of natural course of disorders sparse
- OCD & agoraphobic patients - positive results of behavioral treatments are maintained
- EMDR treatment for PTSD
 - no well controlled studies
 - anecdotal and case reports promising

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Treatment (cont.)

- cognitive and behavioral techniques
- group therapy for social phobia
- pharmacological treatments
 - anafranil, luvox – OCD
 - SSRIs/tofranil – panic
 - benzo's/buspar/SSRIs - GAD

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