

# Compulsive Disorders and their Impact on Daily Life

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## DESCRIPTION

Compulsive disorders, also known as Obsessive Compulsive Disorders (OCD), are mental health conditions characterized by persistent, intrusive thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive behaviors or mental acts (compulsions). These disorders can significantly impact an individual's daily life, relationships, and overall well-being. In this article, we will discuss about the intricacies of compulsive disorders and their manifestations, causes, and potential treatments.

### Compulsive disorders

Compulsive disorders encompass a range of conditions, with OCD being one of the most well-known. The hallmark of these disorders is the presence of distressing, unwanted thoughts that drive individuals to engage in repetitive behaviors or mental rituals to alleviate anxiety or prevent a feared event. These rituals can consume a significant amount of time and interfere with daily functioning.

### Common symptoms

**Obsessions:** These are intrusive and distressing thoughts, images, or urges that repeatedly enter the individual's mind. Examples include fears of contamination, harming others, or fears of making a mistake.

**Compulsions:** In an attempt to manage the anxiety associated with obsessions, individuals engage in repetitive behaviors or mental acts. Common compulsions include washing, checking, counting, or repeating specific words or phrases.

**Avoidance:** Some individuals with compulsive disorders may go to great lengths to avoid situations that trigger their obsessions, leading to significant disruptions in their daily lives.

### Causes and factors

The exact causes of compulsive disorders are complex and likely involve a combination of genetic, neurological, behavioral, cognitive, and environmental factors. A family history of OCD

or other anxiety disorders may increase an individual's susceptibility. Additionally, imbalances in neurotransmitters, particularly serotonin, have been implicated in the development of these disorders.

Childhood trauma, chronic stress, and certain personality traits may also contribute to the onset of compulsive disorders. Environmental factors such as a lack of social support or exposure to stressful life events can further increase the risk.

### Impact on daily life

Compulsive disorders can significantly impair various aspects of an individual's life. Occupational functioning, academic performance, and interpersonal relationships may be compromised. The constant cycle of obsessions and compulsions can be exhausting, leading to feelings of frustration, shame, and isolation.

### Diagnosis and treatment

Diagnosing compulsive disorders involves a thorough assessment by mental health professionals, considering the presence and severity of symptoms. Treatment typically involves a combination of psychotherapy, medication, and support. it includes:

**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** CBT, particularly a specialized form called Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP), is considered the most effective psychotherapeutic approach for compulsive disorders. It involves gradually facing and resisting the compulsive behaviors, helping individuals break the cycle of anxiety and ritualistic behaviors.

**Medication:** Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs), which increase serotonin levels in the brain, are commonly prescribed to alleviate symptoms of compulsive disorders. Other medications, such as tricyclic antidepressants or antipsychotics, may also be considered in certain cases.

**Support groups and education:** Support from friends, family, and support groups can play a crucial role in the treatment process. Educating oneself and loved ones about compulsive disorders helps foster understanding and empathy.

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Compulsive disorders are complex mental health conditions that can significantly impact an individual's life. Recognizing the symptoms, understanding the potential causes, and seeking appropriate treatment are essential steps towards managing and

overcoming these challenges. With the right combination of therapy, medication, and support, individuals with compulsive disorders can regain control over their lives and build a foundation for long-term mental