



NetCare Access is your connection to mental health and alcohol/drug addiction services in Franklin County.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, visit one of our crisis sites or call our 24-hour NetCare Access Crisis Hotline at (614) 276-C.A.R.E.

## **ACCESSING** Information About

# Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

### What is obsessive-compulsive disorder?

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), an anxiety disorder, is characterized by anxious thoughts or rituals that cannot be controlled. Someone with OCD may be plagued by persistent, unwelcome thoughts or images, or by the urgent need to engage in certain rituals. OCD occurs in a spectrum from mild to severe, but if severe and left untreated, can destroy a person's capacity to function at work, school, or even at home.

For example, someone with OCD may be so obsessed with germs or dirt that they wash their hands over and over. They may be filled with doubt and feel the need to check things repeatedly. They may spend long periods of time touching things or counting. They may be preoccupied by thoughts of violence and a fear that they may harm someone close to them.

The disturbing thoughts or images are called obsessions, and the rituals that are performed to try to prevent or dispel them are called compulsions. There is no pleasure in carrying out the rituals, only temporary relief from the discomfort caused by the obsession.

A lot of healthy people can identify with having some of the symptoms of OCD, such as checking the stove several times before leaving the house. But the disorder is diagnosed only when such activities consume at least an hour a day, are very distressing and interfere with daily life.

Anxiety disorders are the most common of all the mental disorders. They are not just a case of "the nerves." They are illnesses, often related to the biological makeup and life experiences of the individual, and they frequently run in families. Anxious feelings may be so uncomfortable that to avoid them one may stop some everyday activities.

Other types of anxiety disorders include panic disorder, specific phobias, social phobias, generalized anxiety disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

### Facts

- ④ OCD affects more than 2 percent of the population, meaning that OCD is more common than such severe mental illnesses as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or panic disorder.
- ④ OCD strikes all ethnic groups.
- ④ Males and females are equally affected.

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## Facts, continued...

- ④ OCD can appear in childhood, adolescence or adulthood, but on the average it first shows up in the teens or early adulthood.
- ④ Studies indicate that at least one-third of cases of OCD in adults began in childhood.
- ④ Evidence suggests that OCD might run in families.
- ④ Depression, other anxiety disorders or even eating disorders may accompany OCD.
- ④ Some people with OCD have regimented rituals while others have rituals that are complex and changing.

## Signs and Symptoms

Someone with OCD may:

- ④ have unwanted ideas or impulses
- ④ experience persistent fears that harm may come to self or a loved one
- ④ have an unreasonable concern with becoming contaminated
- ④ exhibit repetitive behaviors, called compulsions, such as washing and checking
- ④ repeat phrases mentally or make lists
- ④ avoid situations in which they may have to confront their obsessions

## Treatment

Successful treatment methods include:

- ④ Medications
- ④ Behavioral therapy – specifically exposure and response prevention
- ④ Cognitive behavioral therapy

## How to receive help

A person with OCD can benefit from talking with a mental health professional, such as a psychologist, counselor, psychiatrist or social worker, who can assist in providing the individual and his or her family with additional approaches to treatment.

If you or someone you know has OCD or is in a crisis, contact NetCare Access at (614) 276-C.A.R.E. Mental health assessments are provided at both of Netcare's crisis sites, located at 199 S. Central Avenue and 741 E. Broad Street, on a walk-in, first-come-first-served basis, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

NetCare Access provides 24-hour crisis intervention and assessment services to Franklin County residents experiencing a mental health or alcohol/drug crisis. For more information on Netcare's services, contact us at:

Netcare Corporation  
199 S. Central Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43223

Administrative line: (614) 274-9500  
Adult Assessment West: (614) 278-0122  
Adult Assessment East: (614) 278-0155  
24-hour crisis hotline: (614) 276-C.A.R.E. (2273)

[www.netcareaccess.org](http://www.netcareaccess.org)