

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: Patient Education and Self-Help Resources

Essential patient education concepts

- Obsessions, no matter how frightening the content, are still just thoughts.
- Trying to suppress obsessive thoughts is not a solution-it is the heart of the problem.
- Compulsions, no matter how well they relieve anxiety, only perpetuate obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). • Certainty is only a feeling-doubt is inevitable and cannot be eliminated.
- You can learn to tolerate anxiety and doubt without having to neutralize them. • People with OCD often feel crazy, but they are not.
- They may fear becoming impulsive, but they are actually overcontrolled.
- OCD runs in families. You can't help having a "sticky brain," but you can defuse it. • Medication can diminish the power of obsessional thoughts.
- Read about OCD and practice self-conducted exposure and ritual prevention.
- If your own efforts or medication are not enough, seek treatment from an OCD specialist.

Resources

Penzel F. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders: A Complete Guide to Getting Well and Staying Well. New York, NY: Oxford University Press; 2000.

Hyman BM, Pedrick C. OCD Workbook: Your Guide to Breaking Free from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. Oakland, Calif. New Harbinger Publications; 1999.

Grayson J. Freedom From Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: A Personalized Recovery Program For Living With Uncertainty. New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam; 2003.

Baer L. The Imp of the Mind: Exploring the Silent Epidemic of Obsessive Bad Thoughts. New York, NY: Plume; 2002. Schwartz JM, Beyette B. Brain Lock: Free Yourself from Obsessive-Compulsive Behavior. a Four-Step Self-Treatment Method to Change Your Brain Chemistry. New York, NY: Regan Books/Harper-Perennial; 1997.

Gravitz HL. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: New Help for the Family. Santa Barbara, Calif. Healing Visions Press; 1998. Ciarrocchi JW. The Doubting Disease: Help for Scrupulosity and Religious Compulsions. New York, NY: Paulist Press; 1995. Penzel F. The Hair-Pulling Problem: A Complete Guide to Trichotillomania. New York, NY: Oxford University Press; 2003.

Web sites: <http://www.ocfoundation.org>;
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/anxiety/menu.cfm> (English and

Spanish); <http://www.ocdonline.com>; <http://www.trich.org>
(trichotillomania)

Referrals: <http://www.ocfoundation.org>; <http://www.ADAA.org>