

Mental Disorder

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a psychiatric disorder that occurs in about 0.5 per cent of people, most of them start developing symptoms in their adolescence.

Victims of OCD have recurrent, unwelcome and awkward thoughts, impulses and behaviours that cause marked anxiety and distress. Sufferers usually recognise these thoughts and behaviours as products of their own imaginations and try to ignore or suppress them. They try to get rid of them by performing certain actions like washing their hands over and over again, or checking and rechecking things, but relief from such actions is short-lived.

This kind of behaviour varies from patient to patient, but can interfere with their everyday life and cause depression.

OCD treatment entails medication and cognitive behaviour therapy. Drugs which inhibit Serotonin reuptake are commonly used, whereas cognitive behaviour therapy, deals with two factors: 1) exposure to things, or situations that trigger the repetitive behaviours, and 2) ways to prevent responding to those things, or situations. It is important to draw up a list of situations or objects that may cause anxiety in order to avoid them.

Early identification and treatment of OCD will prevent secondary complications such as marital and family problems, social and occupational dysfunction, and depression.