

OCD

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is characterized by a tendency to have obsessions in the form of unwanted thoughts, feelings, sensations, or behaviors that cause an increase in anxiety. This heightened state of anxiety then causes a person to carry out behaviors, thoughts, or rituals (compulsions) in order to provide temporary relief from the discomfort of anxiety.

Some common obsessions can include:

- Concerns about dirt or germs
- Fear of social embarrassment
- Fear of intruders
- Fear of violent thoughts
- Preoccupation with order or symmetry
- Fear of throwing things away or giving things away

Some common rituals can include:

- Checking doors, locks, security, heating implements, stoves
- Repetitive behaviors – these can vary widely from person to person
- Repeated hand washing
- Repeated cleaning behaviors – often very selective
- Repetitive thoughts or magical thinking
- Hoarding or collecting large quantities of items

Treatment is Available

Behavioral and Cognitive therapy combined with gentle exposure and ritual prevention has been found to be effective in the treatment of OCD. While most people with OCD symptoms will have recognition of the condition throughout their lifetimes, the severity of the symptoms can be greatly managed with effective therapy.

If you are finding that repetitive OCD rituals are distressing or interfering with daily life, do not hesitate to seek treatment from an OCD specialist.