

What is OCD?

- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a chronic mental illness that is made up of repetitive, intrusive, and unwanted thoughts called obsessions, and repeated physical and mental acts, called compulsions.
- Obsessions can surround many themes and can cause significant distress and impairment to the lives of those diagnosed with the disorder. Common obsessions involve thoughts regarding contamination (e.g., germs), aggression (e.g., stabbing a loved one), symmetry (e.g., fixation on the arrangement of objects), religion (e.g., fears of disrespecting God or committing a sin), and more.
- Compulsions are actions used to calm obsessive thoughts and are also known to take on many different forms. These include excessively washing or cleaning, avoiding certain places, people, or objects, repeatedly praying, tapping, or counting, organizing objects until they are “just right,” or repeatedly “checking in” with loved ones to seek reassurance.

What are signs and symptoms of having OCD?

- Unwanted, intrusive, repetitive thoughts/fears (i.e., obsessions) that interfere with an individual's daily functioning.
- Feeling anxious or distressed when these obsessions appear.
- Regularly taking part in physical or mental acts (i.e., compulsions) to calm the anxiety that surrounds obsessions.

What treatment options are available for OCD?

- Therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP) have been shown to help those with OCD.
- Medications such as serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SRIs) and selective SRIs (SSRIs) can be prescribed to individuals with OCD.

How are OCD and Schizophrenia related?

- Both schizophrenia and OCD are chronic mental illnesses.
- Both disorders can be linked to abnormalities in brain structure and functioning.
- Both can make it difficult to maintain employment, relationships, and emotional well-being.