

OCD

TREATMENT OPTIONS



Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) is a condition which causes people to worry about things being just right. People with OCD have obsessions, which usually involve doubting themselves, and compulsions, which are actions that help reduce the worry. OCD can take many forms, including checking, counting, sorting, cleaning, and asking for reassurance.

MEDICATION

SEROTONIN ANTIDEPRESSANTS

Examples: fluvoxamine, fluoxetine, sertraline, paroxetine, clomipramine.

Benefits: reduce obsessional worry and compulsive behavior in the high-dose range. May take several months to work fully. Among them, clomipramine is the most effective but it can also have more side effects.

Risks: stomach distress (this resolves with time) and decreased sex drive.

ATYPICALS

Examples: Quetiapine, aripiprazole, risperidone, olanzapine, paliperidone

Benefits: help antidepressants work better

Risks: weight gain, drowsiness, restlessness, diabetes, high cholesterol, tardive dyskinesia (muscle twitching).

OTHER MEDICATIONS

Examples: Ondansetron, granisetron, memantine, topiramate.

Benefits: work alone or with antidepressants. Well tolerated. Topiramate can cause weight loss, concentration problems and renal stones.

NATURAL TREATMENTS

N-ACETYLCYSTEINE (NAC)

This is the main antioxidant in the brain and improves compulsive behavior. It is available in prescription form (Cerefolin) or over-the-counter.

Dose: 1,000-2,000mg daily.

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

These essential oils, which come from fish, help coat brain cells and have a mild effect on reducing OCD.

Dose: 1,000-5,000mg daily of DHA + EPA

THERAPY

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

In this therapy you learn to gain control over obsessions by scheduling regular exercises which help you overcome the anxiety. This therapy brings about similar changes in the brain as medication, and has more lasting effects.

MEDICINE WITH THERAPY

Cycloserine helps the brain learn new skills. If you are undertaking exercises in therapy to reduce OCD, it can help your brain learn from those exercises.

