

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder- An Overview

Commentary

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a chronic mental health condition characterized by intrusive, unwanted thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive behaviors (compulsions) that the individual feels driven to perform. The disorder is often associated with significant distress and impairment in social, academic, and occupational functioning. The etiology of OCD is complex, involving a combination of genetic, neurobiological, and environmental factors. The brain regions implicated in OCD include the cortico-striatal-thalamo-cortical (CSTC) circuitry, which is involved in executive functions and decision-making. The serotonin (5-HT) system is also thought to play a role in the pathophysiology of OCD, as evidenced by the effectiveness of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) in the treatment of the disorder. In addition to pharmacological treatment, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), particularly exposure and response prevention (ERP), is considered a first-line psychological intervention for OCD. The disorder can be comorbid with other conditions, such as anxiety disorders, depression, and tic disorders. The prevalence of OCD is estimated to be between 1% and 3% in the general population, with a similar prevalence in children and adolescents. The course of the disorder is often chronic and recurrent, with a significant impact on the quality of life of affected individuals. Early diagnosis and treatment are crucial for improving outcomes and preventing long-term disability.

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