

Somatoform Disorders

Ch.6-Somatoform Disorders

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- Module Objectives**
- What are Somatoform Disorders?
    - What are some forms of somatoform disorders?
  - What are the causes for these disorders?
  - How can they be treated?

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Somatoform disorders occur when

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or complaints.

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hypochondriac  
hypochondriac

hypochondriac (hīp'ohn-dri-ak)  
A person afflicted with hypochondria.

Relating to or suffering from hypochondria.

hatched with hypochondria, and in the left breast.

hypochondriac.info

Hypochondriasis is a persistent fear of having a serious medical illness.

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The fear or idea is based on the

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Hypochondriasis

Almost any physical sensation may become the basis for concern. Some may focus on heart rate, perspiration, pain, or something minor, like a cough.

"I have a headache...I must have a brain tumor!"

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**THINK**

Does the medical assurance from doctors reduce this worry?




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it may provide a short-term reduction in anxiety, but increases it long-term.

People with Hypochondriasis often see many doctors, looking for someone to confirm the illness.

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Who does this disorder affect?

- The prevalence of this disorder in the general population is not fully known, it is approximated that this effects about \_\_\_\_\_
- Throughout history this disorder was typically associated with women as a "hysterical" disorder.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Prevalence

- Hypochondriasis may emerge at any time in life, with peak age periods in adolescence, middle ages (40-50's), and after 60 (Kellner, 1986).

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Problems with Perception?

- It is widely agreed that Hypochondriasis is a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Research has confirmed that patients with hypochondriasis show enhanced perceptual sensitivity to illness cues.

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People with this disorder also tend to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

This causes them to become quickly aware and frightened of any possible sign of illness.

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Patients with hypochondriasis have a high rate of comorbidity. In one study, 88% of patients with hypochondriasis had one or more concurrent disorders.

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Dysthymic disorder
- Major depression
- Somatization disorder
- Panic disorder

These patients are 3 times more likely to have a personality disorder than the general population (Barsky, 1992).

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### What causes people to develop this?

- Hypochondriasis tends to run in families, suggesting a genetic vulnerability (Kellner, 1985).
- BUT...Some research suggests that this can also be a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### Treatment

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and showing patients how they can create symptoms by focusing attention on certain body parts.
- CBT showed a 76% improvement rate (Warwick et al., 1996)
- Medications are seldom used, but SSRI's may be

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## Conversion Disorder

This term was made famous by Freud, who believed the anxiety resulted from unconscious conflicts that was “\_\_\_\_\_”  
\_\_\_\_\_

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- Conversion disorders tend to be associated with physical \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Paralysis
- Blindness
- Difficulty speaking




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- Those who report blindness often can avoid objects in their visual field, as well as those reporting paralysis of the legs might get up and run somewhere in an emergency and are astounded they were able to do this.
- This can account for some who are miraculously “cured” during religious ceremonies.




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LIAR, LIAR, PANTS ON FIRE

Unlike conversion disorders that are not under the person's physical control, Malingering is

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Why are you such a faker?

- Somewhere in between conversion and faking physical symptoms are \_\_\_\_\_
- People with this disorder fake physical or psychological symptoms to become a patient for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Commonly referred to as \_\_\_\_\_

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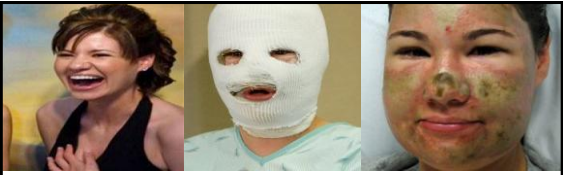
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- Patients with factitious disorders \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ by a variety of methods
- Contaminating urine samples with blood
- Taking hallucinogens
- Injecting themselves with bacteria to produce infections

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Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy

- The parent may resort to extreme tactics to create the appearance of an illness in the child.
  - This disorder is a factitious disorder, but really an atypical form of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Usually establish a positive relationship with the medical staff.

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The caregiver may exaggerate, fabricate, or induce symptoms.



Children effected are typically preschool age, although there have been reported cases in children up to 16 years old.

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Who does this disorder effect?

There are equal numbers of boys and girls, however, \_\_\_\_\_ are female.




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Statistics

- Conversion disorders are relatively rare in mental health settings, often because people with these symptoms are more likely to consult a neurologist or specialists.
- It was concluded that environmental stress, especially sexual abuse, are common among children and adolescents with conversion disorder (Roelofs et al., 2002).

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Treatment

- Few studies have evaluated the effectiveness of treatment, but the principle strategy is to identify and attend to the traumatic/stressful life event, if it is still present and remove the sources of secondary gain.

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What's Next?

- Dissociative Identity Disorders

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