

Obsessive compulsive disorder: when repeated actions go beyond quirks

SEEN BY A LARGE PART OF THE POPULATION AS JUST A “QUIRK”, OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDERS (OCD) ARE NOT JUST ABOUT REPETITIVE RITUALS OR BEHAVIORS.

Considered clinically as a mental disorder, OCD is classified as one of the anxiety disorders, and can happen in response to obsessions imposed by the mind or the need to rigorously follow rules (compulsion).

One of the characteristics of OCD is that, in addition to causing discomfort in others, it also causes discomfort in the person who has the disorder. In fact, this is one of the points in which it is different from quirks.

Traits of people who suffer from OCD:

- Excessive concerns with cleanliness
- The need to wash their hands at all times, even if they just finished washing them
- Excessive and systematic checking of the closing of doors and windows
- The need to always wear the same color of clothing on certain occasions
- Excessive discomfort when noticing misaligned objects and an urgency to fix them
- The need to perform rituals
- Limitations imposed by fear (ex: fear of making mistakes, feeling exposed, contracting diseases) that lead to a behavior known as “avoidance”.



Recommendations for those who live with people who suffer from OCD:

- Offer support and empathy to those suffering from the disorder
- Be understanding and tolerant of anxiety attacks and relapses in the patient's treatment
- List repetitive behaviors that, eventually, may have gone unnoticed by the patient, as this can help in the therapy process.

Causes of OCD

It is not yet known exactly what causes the development of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders, but research points to evidence of OCD links to biological factors, such as genetics, brain neurochemistry and brain injuries or infections.

80% OF PATIENTS SEEKING TREATMENT FOR OCD SHOW IMPROVEMENTS, ACCORDING TO THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF RS.

Treatment:

Cognitive-behavioral therapy has been considered of great importance for the treatment of those who suffer from this type of disorder. Likewise, the combination of medications that act against obsession can also contribute to the success of the treatment.

