

Anxiety disorders

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Anxiety

- reaction on expected danger coming from inner or outer reality
- fear, stress
- spontaneous, situational, anticipatory
- symptoms

Intro

- Anxiety disorders
 - *common*
 - with considerable *morbidity* and *social cost*
 - accompanied by *anxiety, worry, distress*

Anxiety disorders

- 1. Panic disorders w/wo agoraphobia
- 2. Social phobia
- 3. Generalized anxiety disorder
- 4. Obsessive - compulsive disorder
- 5. Posttraumatic stress disorder and acute stress disorder

1. Panic disorders and agoraphobia

- recurrent unexpected panic attacks
 - discrete periods of intense fear
 - developed abruptly, peak within 10 minutes
 - may be associated with certain situations

Criteria for panic attack I

- Anxiety symptoms
 - 1. palpitation, pounding heart, or accelerated heart rate
 - 2. sweating
 - 3. trembling or shaking
 - 4. sensations of shortness of breath or smothering
 - 5. feeling of choking
 - 6. chest pain or discomfort

Criteria for panic attack II

- Anxiety symptoms (cont.)
 - 7. nausea or abdominal distress
 - 8. feeling dizzy, unsteady, light-headed, or faint
 - 9. derealization /feeling of unreality/, depersonalization /being detached from oneself/
 - 10. fear of losing control or going crazy
 - 11. fear of dying
 - 12. parestesias
 - 13. chills or hot flushes

1a/ Panic disorder without agoraphobia

- A.
 - recurrent unexpected panic attack
 - at least one of the attacks per month
- B.
 - absence of agoraphobia

1b/ Panic disorder with agoraphobia

- Criteria for agoraphobia
 - A. Anxiety about being in places or situations from which escape might be difficult.
 - B. The situations are avoided with marked distress or anxiety about having a P.A.

1c/ Agoraphobia without history of panic disorder

- A. The presence of agoraphobia related to fear of developing panic like symptoms/dizziness or diarrhea/.
- B. Criteria have never been met for panic disorder.

Treatment

- Pharmacological
 - SSRIs
 - RIMA
 - Benzodiazepines – only in emergency
- Psychoterapeutic
 - Cognitive-behavioral treatment /relaxation, respiratory control, exposure therapy/

2. Social phobia

- Fear of one or more social or performance situations in which the person is exposed to unfamiliar people that will be embarrassing.

Diagnostic criteria

- Fear
 - marked and persistent
 - provoked by phobic stimulus
 - recognised as unreasonable
- Phobic situation
 - avoided by anxiety, distress
 - interferes with the persons routine, occupational, social etc. activities
- Duration - at least 6 months in individuals under age 18

Treatment

- Pharmacotherapy /RIMA, SSRIs, benzodiazepines only in emergency/
- Psychosocial /CBT/
 - exposure therapy

Specific phobia

- Arachnophobia
- Acrophobia
- Claustrophobia
- Carcinophobia
- Thanatophobia
- Aquaphobia
- Aerophobia
- Hemophobia
- Nosophobia
- ...

3. Generalized anxiety disorder

GAD

- Excessive anxiety or worry lasting for 6 months or longer, accompanied by at least three somatic symptoms.

GAD - diagnostic criteria I

- A. Excessive anxiety and worry
- B. Difficult to control it
- C. Association with at least three symptoms
 - muscle tension
 - feeling on edge
 - being easily fatigued
 - difficulty concentrating
 - irritability
 - sleep disturbance

Treatment

- Pharmacotherapy
 - Antidepressants SSRIs, BZD, beta-blockers
- Psychotherapy
 - dynamic, supportive, CBT

4. Obsessive-compulsive disorder

OCD

- Patient have either obsession and compulsion that are a significant source of distress
 - are time - consuming
 - interfere significantly with the person's normal routine, occupational functioning or social activities or relationships.

Obsessions

- 1. Recurrent and persistent thoughts, impulses, or images.
- 2. Not simply excessive worries about real-life problems.
- 3. Attempt to ignore or suppress them with some other thought or action.
- 4. Product of one's mind.

Compulsion

- 1. Repetitive behaviors in response to an obsession which must be rigidly applied.
- 2. Behaviors or mental act preventing or reducing distress.
 - /handwashing, ordering, checking/

Treatment

- Psychotherapy, behavior therapy
- Pharmacotherapy
 - SSRIs, Li, AP
- ECT
- Psychosurgery

5. Posttraumatic stress disorder

A. PTSD - diagnostic criteria I

- A. Exposition to a traumatic event /death, injury/ with the experience of intense fear, helplessness, horror.
- B. The traumatic event is persistently reexperienced /images, ilusions, flashbacks, dreams.../

PTSD - diagnostic criteria II

- C. Three or more of the stimuli associated with the trauma
 - thoughts, feelings, conversations
 - activities, places, people
 - inability to recall important aspects of the trauma
 - markedly diminished interest in significant activities
 - feeling of detachment from others
 - restricted range of affects /loving feels etc./
 - sense of foreshortened future /doesn't expect to have a career, marriage, children.../

PTSD - diagnostic criteria III

- D. Two or more of persistent symptoms
 - difficulty falling or staying asleep
 - irritability or outburst of anger
 - difficulty concentrating
 - hypervigilance
 - exaggerated startle response

PTSD - diagnostic criteria IV

- E. Duration more than one month
- F. The disturbance causes clinically significant distress in social, occupational or other important areas.

Treatment

- Pharmacotherapy
 - Antidepressants SSRIs, mood stabilizers, anxiolytics, anticonvulsants
- Psychotherapy
 - individual, group, relaxation training

References:

- **Waldinger RJ.: Psychiatry for medical students, Washington, DC : American Psychaitric Press, 1997**
- **Kaplan HI, Sadock BJ, Grebb JA.: Kaplan and Sadock's synopsis of psychiatry, Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1997**