



PERSONALITY DISORDER

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ABSTRACT

A personality disorder is a mental disorder involving a rigid and unhealthy pattern of thinking. Personality disorders are preva

Key words:

Histrionic personality disorder,
anxiety, agitation or insomnia,
impulsivity and aggression

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INTRODUCTION

Definition

Personality stems from genetic, biological, and environmental factors, and it is what makes us all individuals.

When an individual has a personality disorder, it becomes harder for them to respond to the changes and demands of life and to form and maintain relationships with others.

Cluster a personality disorders

- These disorders involve behaviour that seems unusual and eccentric to others, according to Mental Health America (MHA).

They include:

- paranoid personality disorder
- schizoid personality disorder
- schizotypal personality disorder

Cluster B personality disorders

- These disorders feature behavior that is emotional, dramatic, or erratic.

Examples include:

- Antisocial personality disorder
- Borderline personality disorder
- Histrionic personality disorder
- Narcissistic personality disorder

Cluster C personality disorders

Anxiety and fear underlie the behaviours that occur with Cluster C disorders.

Examples of these include

- Avoidant personality disorder
- Dependent personality disorder
- Obsessive-compulsive personality disorders

To receive a diagnosis of a personality disorder, an individual must meet certain criteria.

Paranoid personality disorder

A person with paranoid personality disorder finds it hard to trust others. They might think that people are lying to or manipulating them, even when there is no evidence of this happening.

A person may experience

- mistrust and suspicion
- hyper vigilance
- fear
- Anxiety about someone taking advantage of them
- Anger over perceived abuse

Risk factors

Although the precise cause of personality disorders is not known, certain factors seem to increase the risk of developing or triggering personality disorders, including:

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- Family history of personality disorders or other mental illness
- Abusive, unstable or chaotic family life during childhood
- Being diagnosed with childhood conduct disorder
- Variations in brain chemistry and structure.

Diagnosis

- **Physical exam.** The doctor may do a physical exam and ask in-depth questions about your health. In some cases, your symptoms may be linked to an underlying physical health problem. Your evaluation may include lab tests and a screening test for alcohol and drugs.
- **Psychiatric evaluation.** This includes a discussion about your thoughts, feelings and behaviour and may include a questionnaire to help pinpoint a diagnosis. With your permission, information from family members or others may be helpful.
- **Diagnostic criteria in the DSM-5.** Your doctor may compare your symptoms to the criteria in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), published by the American Psychiatric Association.

Your treatment team may include Treatment

your primary doctor or other primary care provider as well as a:

- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist or other therapist
- Psychiatric nurse
- Pharmacist
- Social worker

Psychotherapy, also called talk therapy, is the main way to treat personality disorders.

Psychotherapy

During psychotherapy with a mental health professional, you can learn about your condition and talk about your moods, feelings, thoughts and behaviors. You can learn to cope with stress and manage your disorder. Psychotherapy may be provided in individual sessions, group therapy, or sessions that include family or even friends. Family therapy provides support and education to families dealing with a family member who has a personality disorder.

Medications

There are no medications specified. However, several types of psychiatric medications may help with various personality disorder symptoms.

- **Antidepressants.** Antidepressants may be useful if you have a depressed mood, anger, impulsivity, irritability or hopelessness, which may be associated with personality disorders.
- **Mood stabilizers.** As their name suggests, mood stabilizers can help even out mood swings or reduce irritability, impulsivity and aggression.
- **Antipsychotic medications.** Also called neuroleptics, these may be helpful if your symptoms include losing touch with reality (psychosis) or in some cases if you have anxiety or anger problems.
- **Anti-anxiety medications.** These may help if you have anxiety, agitation or insomnia. But in some cases, they can increase impulsive behaviour, so they're avoided in certain types of personality disorders.

Complications

Personality disorders can significantly disrupt the lives of both the affected person and those who care about that person. Personality disorders may cause problems with relationships, work or school, and can lead to social isolation or alcohol or drug abuse.

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