



MENTAL ILLNESSES: A SUMMARY

ILLNESS

Anxiety Disorders

SYMPTOMS

Unrealistic or excessive worry, sleep disturbances, shakiness, trembling, muscle aches, sweating, dizziness, tension, fatigue, racing or pounding heart, upset stomach, lump in throat, rapid pulse and / or breathing rate.

Bipolar Disorder

Involves episodes of both mania and depression. Symptoms of mania (formerly manic-depression) include: increased energy & activity, racing thoughts, rapid (pressured) speech, little need for sleep, the person may feel euphoric. They may quickly become depressed (see depression symptoms).

Depression

Extreme sadness, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, person may be irritable. A significant change in appetite, noticeable change in weight and sleeping patterns (may eat much less, sleep much longer, or the reverse). Loss of interest, energy, inappropriate guilt, inability to concentrate.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Obsessions can be recognized as recurrent or persistent thoughts or impulses that are intrusive and inappropriate. They are not simply excessive concerns about real-life problems. Compulsions can be recognized as repetitive behaviors (hand-washing, checking, etc), or mental acts (praying, counting, etc).

Panic Disorder

Experiencing more than one unexpected panic attack: accelerated heart rate, trembling, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea, dizziness, fear of losing control. After the first attack, the person has a persistent concern about having additional attacks and worries about the implications or consequences of the attack (having a heart attack).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Often experienced by veterans, victims of violence and natural disasters, symptoms may surface immediately or up to several years following the traumatic experience. Intrusive thoughts or memories of the event, avoiding things that remind them of the event. They may experience insomnia, have nightmares, feel guilty because they survived, and abuse drugs or alcohol to help them cope.

Personality Disorders

Inflexible and maladaptive patterns of behavior which cause significant impairment to the individual's ability to function. Symptoms include difficulties with relationships, fear of abandonment, and being easily hurt by criticism or disapproval.

Schizophrenia

The first symptoms are deterioration in work performance, appearance and social relationships. Individuals may believe that someone is spying on them, hearing their thoughts, putting thoughts into their mind. They may hear voices, see things that are not there, or feel things on their skin.