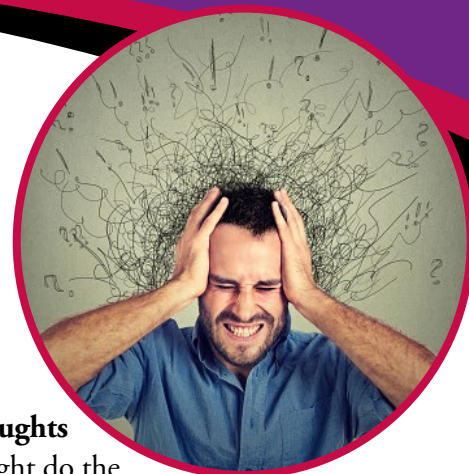




Education for Lifelong Mental Health

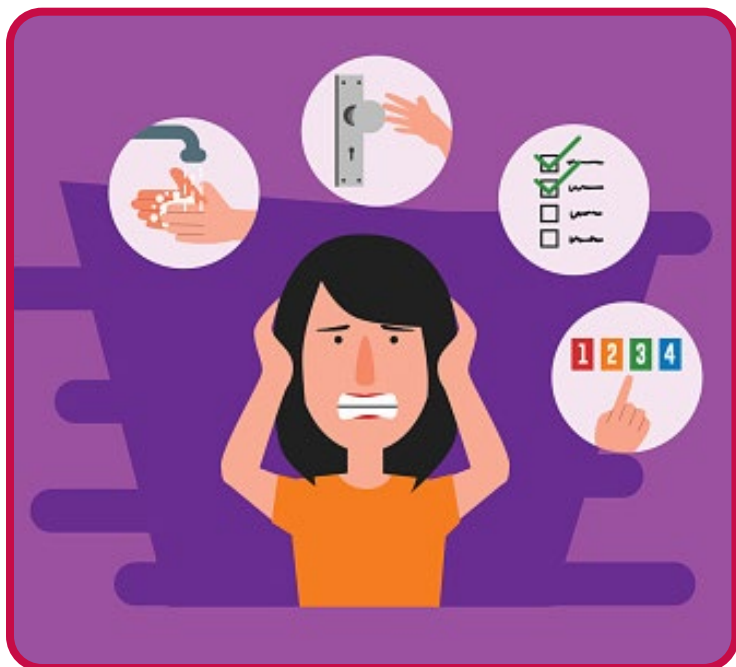
What I should know about

OCD *(Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder)*



What is OCD?

OCD stands for **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**. It means you get **unwanted thoughts** (called obsessions) that make you feel worried or scared. To try to feel better, you might do the **same action over and over** (called a compulsion). This is more than just liking things neat or having habits. With OCD, these thoughts and actions take up a lot of time and make life harder.



How might OCD feel?

In your mind:

- Scary thoughts that won't go away
- Worry something bad will happen if you don't do a certain thing
- Feeling upset or afraid if things aren't "just right"

In what you do:

- Washing hands over and over
- Checking doors or lights many times
- Counting things or repeating words
- Lining up or touching things in a special way

You might feel a **big urge** to do these things, even if you know it doesn't really make sense.



Why do people get OCD?

- OCD can run in families.
- Brain chemicals may work differently.
- Stress or big changes can sometimes make it start.

OCD is **no one's fault**. It is a health problem in the brain.

Who can help?

A doctor or counselor can help by:

- Teaching you ways to face scary thoughts without using the habit (this is called **ERP therapy**, a special type of CBT).
- Giving you medicine that helps balance brain chemicals. Many people get better with **both therapy and medicine**.

What can help me feel better?

There are many helpful strategies available:

- If you are on a treatment plan from a professional, try to follow it.
- Talk to people you trust about how you feel.
- Get sleep and exercise and eat healthy food.
- Stay away from alcohol and drugs.



When should I tell someone?

If OCD makes it hard to go to work, school, or enjoy life, or if you ever feel like hurting yourself, tell someone right away.

In the U.S., you can call 988 for help.

You are not alone. Help is there for you.



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