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D(II)H Paper III-Psychopathology
Topic: Personality Disorder**

Cluster C: Anxious

- **Avoidant personality disorder:** People with this type of disorder often experience feelings of inadequacy, inferiority or unattractiveness. They usually dwell on criticism from others and avoid participating in new activities or making new friends.
- **Dependent personality disorder:** In dependent personality disorder, people heavily depend on other people to meet their emotional and physical needs. They usually avoid being alone. They regularly need reassurance when making decisions. They may also be likely to tolerate physical and verbal abuse.
- **Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder:** People with obsessive-compulsive personality disorder have an overwhelming need for order. They strongly adhere to rules and regulations. They feel extremely uncomfortable when perfection isn't achieved. They may even neglect personal relationships to focus on making a project perfect.

How Is a Personality Disorder Diagnosed?

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), is a reference doctors and mental health professionals use to help diagnose mental health conditions. Each personality disorder has criteria that must be met for a diagnosis. A primary care or mental health provider will ask you questions based on these criteria to determine the type of personality disorder. In order for a diagnosis to be made, the behaviors and feelings must be consistent across many life circumstances. They should also cause significant distress and impairment in at least two of the following areas:

- the way you perceive or interpret yourself and other people
- the way you act when dealing with other people
- the appropriateness of your emotional responses
- how well you can control your impulses

In some cases, your primary care or mental health provider may perform blood tests to determine whether a medical problem is causing your symptoms. They may also order a screening test for alcohol and drugs.

How Is a Personality Disorder Treated?

Treatment can vary depending on the type and severity of your personality disorder. It may include psychotherapy and medications.

Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy, or talk therapy, may help in managing personality disorders. During psychotherapy, you and a therapist can discuss your condition, as well as your feelings and thoughts. This can provide you with insight on how to manage your symptoms and behaviors that interfere with your daily life.

There are many different types of psychotherapy. Dialectical behavior therapy can include group and individual sessions where people learn how to tolerate stress and improve relationships. Cognitive behavioral therapy aims to teach people how to change negative thinking patterns so they can better cope with everyday challenges.

Medication

There aren't any drugs approved for the treatment of personality disorders. However, certain types of prescription medications might be helpful in reducing various personality disorder symptoms:

- antidepressants, which can help improve a depressed mood, anger, or impulsivity

- mood stabilizers, which prevent mood swings and reduce irritability and aggression
- antipsychotic medications, also known as neuroleptics, which may be beneficial for people who often lose touch with reality
- anti-anxiety medications, which help relieve anxiety, agitation, and insomnia

Source:

Abnormal Psychology in a Changing World by Jeffrey S. Nevid

Essentials of Abnormal Psychology by V. Mark Durand