



A Simple Guide To Hypochondriasis, Diagnosis, Treatment And Related Diseases (A Simple Guide to Medical Conditions)

Kenneth Kee

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Hypochondria

I'm a hypochondriac. Yesterday it was brain damage from the vodka the night before.
Today, heart attack - my arm and chest started hurting at the same time.

Lisa Marie Presley

What is Hypochondriasis?

Hypochondriasis is a neurotic condition with the excessive belief that real or imagined physical symptoms are signs of a serious illness in the body despite medical reassurance and other evidence to the contrary.

It is always associated with anxiety or depression about negative medical examinations.

There is a concern about the symptoms of alleged diseases which may become obsessive in quality.

Somatoform disorders such as hypochondriasis may be an unconscious behavior that may serve to explain his symptoms to avoid internal conflicts and external stressors.

What are the causes of Hypochondriasis?

Causes:

There is no organic basis for the patient's symptoms.

Often there is a history of familial predisposition which may suggest inherited condition.

Early development factor may predispose to this condition.

People with hypochondria are always concerned with their physical health.

Hypochondriacs have an unrealistic fear of serious disease such as heart disease, venereal disease, cancer that is out of proportion to the actual risk.

There is no particular cause of hypochondria, and it occurs equally in men and women.

The condition usually starts in middle age although it may occur in children.

Hypochondriasis may also occur in the course of an episode of depression.

What are the symptoms of Hypochondriasis?

Symptoms

The neurotic disorder can last for at least 6 months (24 weeks)

Symptoms are frequently misinterpreted.

There are no apparent physical disorders that can explain the symptoms

There is a persistent fear of having a serious illness in spite of repeated negative examinations.

The patient is usually very preoccupied with the fear of illness.

The symptoms may shift and change.

The symptoms may be vague or specific.

Those who are affected may recognize that their fear of having a serious disease is excessive, unreasonable, or unfounded.

How is Hypochondriasis diagnosed?

Diagnosis:

The diagnosis may be made from the following facts:

1. There is a preoccupation about health
2. There is inappropriate concern about minor symptoms believed to be symptoms of serious illnesses like cancer, heart or venereal disease
3. There is failure of reassurance by repeated negative examinations and investigations done based on the symptoms given.
4. The patient may insist that some factor has been overlooked or undiscovered
5. Hypochondriacs are often involved frequently with diet and exercise fads

A proper physical examination including neurological and psychiatric assessment is needed to rule out organic illnesses.

A complete psychological evaluation is also required to rule out other related disorders

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