

OCD

Information for children

OCD stands for **obsessive compulsive disorder**.

OCD is a type of anxiety.

People with OCD worry A LOT about bad things that might happen.

People with OCD try to make everything perfect so that the bad things do not happen.

They might worry so much, that they spend hours or days trying to stop the bad things happening.

Normal worry, or OCD?

It is normal for people to worry about things.

But when that worry is so intense and the person cannot stop worrying, this is called an **obsession**.

The things people do to deal with obsession, is called a **compulsion**.

People can keep going over and over the worry in their minds.

What are obsessions?

Obsessions are the strong, non-stop worry thoughts that people get with OCD.

People might be obsessed by things like:

- ✗ germs or dirt
- ✗ illness or injury

- × coming across unlucky numbers or words
 - × things being even or straight
- × things being perfect or just right in a certain way
 - × making mistakes or not being sure
 - × doing or thinking something bad

What are compulsions?

Compulsions are the behaviours, or actions, that someone with OCD does to try to 'shut down' the worry thoughts.

Common compulsions are:

- × lots of hand washing or showering (way more than usual)
 - × constant counting (like having to count 25 white cars before you going to work)
- × touching (like touching every single fence post between home and where they are going)
- × checking things over and over (such as doors, locks, or stoves)
- × doing things a certain number of times (like having to try on five dresses before leaving their room)
 - × arranging things in a very particular or neat way
 - × asking the same question over and over
- × tying and retying shoes over and over until they feel just right.



What is life like with OCD?

Living with OCD can be very hard.
Compulsions take up a **lot** of time and energy.
People can feel ashamed or embarrassed.

The person with OCD can find it hard to manage each day or to go to work.

Other people, including the other people in the family, can have trouble understanding what is going on.

OCD can make people feel it is taking over their whole life.
People with OCD need support and help.

THE GOOD NEWS IS!

OCD can be treated with medicine and by seeing an experienced 'helping' person, like a doctor or a counsellor, to talk about the OCD and how it is affecting their life. One type of help is called **cognitive behaviour therapy**, where the person works closely with a counsellor to change the way they think and change their actions.

Remember:

- it is not their fault they have OCD
- It is not YOUR fault
- it is not your job to make your mum or dad feel better
- with the right help they can feel better
- it is important for you to do the things each day that are important like going to school and having fun.
- talk to another trusted adult if you are worried, sad or confused....

