



Anxiety Across the Lifespan

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Disclosures

No disclosures

Epidemiology

- Prevalence rate for anxiety disorders children and adolescents is 13%
- Anxiety disorders are the most common psychiatric disorders in children and anxiety disorders frequently have their beginnings in childhood or adolescence
- There is a pattern of anxiety disorders in how they occur across the lifespan

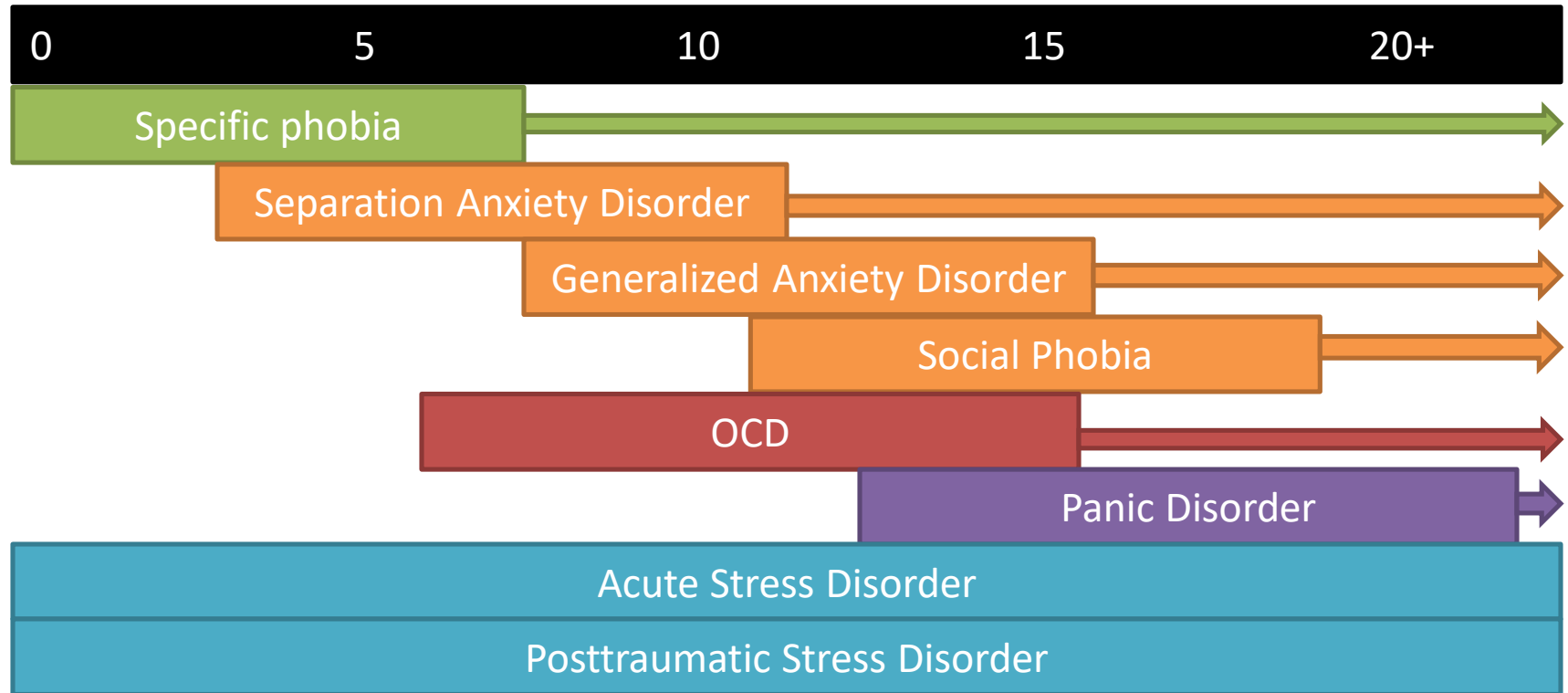
Developmental Progression of Fears

- Preschool: Imaginary, Objects/ Situations
- Grade School: Health/ Harm, Scrutiny/ Competence
- Adolescence: Social Adequacy and Performance

Developmental Progression of Fears

- Preschool: Specific Phobia, Separation Anxiety Disorder
- Grade School: Generalized Anxiety Disorder, OCD
- Adolescence: Social Phobia, Panic Disorder

Anxiety Disorders Across the Lifespan



Specific Phobia

- Animals, insects etc.
- Environmental - thunder, water, heights
- Blood, injection or other suspected painful event
- Situational - tunnels, bridges, elevators
- 70% have another anxiety disorder

Separation Anxiety Disorder

- Excessive concern regarding separation from home or from attachment figures
 - Bad things happening to parent and or child
 - Cannot be alone
 - Avoidance Difficulty falling asleep or sleeping with loved ones
 - Physical aches and pains
 - Accommodation by adults
 - Impairment or distress.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

- Excessive worry and apprehensiveness
 - Restless, keyed-up or on edge.
 - Fatigued at end of school day
 - Concentration problems “choking on tests”
 - Sleep problems (falling asleep)
 - Tense and irritable
- Unable to control the worry
- Impairment or distress

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

- Prominent obsessions or compulsions
 - Dirt, germs, or other contamination
 - Ordering and arranging
 - Checking
 - Repetitive acts
- Impairing or time consuming

Assessment:

Repetitive Thoughts & Behaviors

- Obsessions
- Ruminations
- Delusions
- Perseverative thoughts
- Cravings
- Over-valued ideas
- Flash-backs
- Compulsions
- Tics
- Stereotypies
- Perseverative behaviors
- Addictive behaviors
- Habits

Social Phobia

- Fear of social or performance situations
 - Specific
 - Generalized

Panic Disorder

- Attacks of anxiety (Physical Symptoms)
 - Heart rate, pounding heart, palpitations
 - Hyperventilation, shortness of breath
 - Choking sensation
 - Chest discomfort or pain
 - Abdominal pain
 - Some psychological symptoms
- Worry about the next one
- Avoidance behavior related to the attacks
- Agoraphobia....

Acute Stress Disorder/Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

- True stressful event – life threatening
- Re-experiencing the event
- Avoidance and numbing
- Increased arousal
- Acute Stress Disorder: Time limited
- PTSD: Enduring symptoms:
 - Pre-existing mental disorder
 - Proximity
 - Post-traumatic environment

Physical Symptoms – Provoked and Spontaneous

- Anxious children listen to their bodies
- Headache
- Stomachache – stomach and bowel problems
- Sick in the morning and can't fall asleep in the evening
- Frequent urge to urinate or defecate
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain - tachycardia
- Sensitive gag reflex - fear of choking or vomiting
- Difficulty swallowing solid foods – growth inhibition?
- Dizziness, lightheaded
- Tension and tiredness – exhausted and irritable after a school day
- Derealization and depersonalization
- Avoidance to prevent above physical symptoms

Other symptoms

- **Physical complaints – headaches, stomach aches, dramatic presentations of pain.**
- Problems with falling asleep and middle of the night awakening, repeated visits to parents room
- Eating problems – over and under
- Avoidance of outside and interpersonal activities – school, parties, camp, sleepovers, safe strangers
- Excessive need for reassurance – new situations, bedtime, school, storms, bad things happening
- Inattention and poor performance at school
- Explosive outbursts
- Not necessarily pervasive – some areas of function remain

Course of anxiety

- Onset in childhood
- “Prepubertal affective illness”
- Adolescence
 - Intense symptoms “burn out”
 - Generalized anxiety
 - Poor adaptation and coping – easily flooded and overwhelmed (pre-borderline)
 - Some morph to depression
- Young adulthood
- Middle and older adulthood