

### **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder**

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder characterized by repetitive thoughts that increase anxiety, and by behaviors that are recognized as excessive but extremely difficult, if not impossible, to control. Sufferers may describe obsessions as unwanted repetitive thoughts or persistent fears. These individuals then try to dispel the anxiety caused by these thoughts with ritualistic and often repetitive behaviors called compulsions.

More than 2% of Americans suffer from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. The key to treatment of OCD is early recognition and aggressive treatment. The average time from onset of symptoms to OCD diagnosis is about 14 years. That delay can make the symptoms more resistant to treatment. Medications and psychotherapy are essential for maximum symptom management and overall improvement.