

WEEK SIX-

Stress, Fear & Anxiety

Fear- A state where a person feels a strong sense of dread towards a specific object/event

Stress- Physical, emotional, psychological, social or spiritual reaction from a situation/event/condition stimulated in a person

Depression & anxiety

- Close association
- Presence of both is often associated with reduced efficacy of treatment
- Presence of both associated with higher rates of suicide

Anxiety

- A state where a person feels a strong sense of dread, without having a specific reason
- A state in which a person has feelings of uneasiness

Signs & Symptoms

Autonomic Symptoms	Physical Symptoms	Psychological Symptoms
Tachycardia	Tremor	Insomnia
Sweating	Muscular aches	Irritability
Dizziness	Difficulty swallowing	Easily startled
Hot/cold spells	'Lump' in throat	Inability to relax
Frequency of micturition	Restlessness	Poor concentration
Diarrhoea/nausea	Fatigue	Feeling tense
Paraesthesia (pins & needles)	Distractibility	Reduced sense of humour

Generalised Anxiety Disorder

- A condition where people tend to worry about many things over long periods of time
- Associated with physical symptoms: muscle tension, sleeplessness, irritability, restlessness
- Diagnosis requires 6 months of symptoms most days

Treatments-

- Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Relaxation therapy and deep breathing exercises
- Self-help groups, journaling and healthy living
- Medication- short term during high periods of stress:
 - Anti-depressants most common
 - Anxiolytics- short term relief from physical symptoms

Panic Attacks

- Sudden, severe, uncontrollable anxiety
- Thoughts of dread and fear
- Symptoms include: palpitations, chest pain, tachycardia, sweats, shakes, difficulty breathing, nausea, dizziness, depersonalisation, derealisation, fear of losing control, weakness/tingling in limbs, chills

Treatments-

- Avoid recreational drugs
- Psychological treatments most effective:
 - o Psychoeducation about anxiety
 - o Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
 - o Relaxation and slow breathing training
 - o Exposure therapy

Phobias

- Irrational fear that's out of proportion to actual threat
- 3 main types:
 - Agoraphobia (e.g. not wanting to leave the house, being scared of confined spaces)
 - Social phobia (e.g. not wanting to leave the house, not wanting to interact with others)
 - Specific phobias (e.g. fear of spiders, snakes, moths, heights etc)
- Generally anxiety and fearfulness only occurs in presence of object of fear

Treatments-

- Usually given by specialists
- Cognitive behaviour therapy and/or psychotherapy to re-structure habitual thinking patterns
- Gradual supported exposure to the object of fear
- Antidepressants are used