



Anxiety Disorders

Psychology 311
Abnormal Psychology

Listen to the audio lecture while viewing these slides

1

Psyc 311 – Abnormal Psychology

Overview

- Definition
 - Diffuse, vague, unpleasant feeling of fear and apprehension
 - Worries about unknown dangers
- Different from Fear
 - Fear – you can state what you are afraid of
 - Anxiety – Usually cannot identify the cause

2

Psyc 311 – Abnormal Psychology

More overview

- More common in women
- Becomes evident in late teens and early twenties
- Can last 20 years or more
- Children who have experiences in which they have no control
 - May be vulnerable to anxiety disorders

3

Psyc 311 – Abnormal Psychology

Symptoms

- Physical
 - Shortness of breath
 - Rapid heart rate
 - Frequent Urination
 - Diarrhea
 - Loss of appetite
 - Sleeplessness
 - Fainting
 - Dizziness
 - Sweating
 - Tremors
 - Others

4

Psyc 311 – Abnormal Psychology

Psychological

- Exaggerated distressing interpretations
- Nervous
- Irritable
- Jumpy
- Tense

5

Psyc 311 – Abnormal Psychology

Types of Maladaptive Behavior

- Two Groups
 - Frequent experience of anxiety, worry and apprehension
 - Is more intense and lasts longer than the average person
 - Frequent development of avoidance behaviors, ritual acts, or repetitive thoughts
 - Protects the individual from experiencing anxiety

6

Four Types of Disorders

- Generalized Anxiety Disorders
- Panic disorders
- Phobic Disorders
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorders

7

Generalized Anxiety Disorders

- Anxiety that persists for at least 6 months
- Is not attributed to a recent life event

8

Symptoms

- Worry and apprehensive feelings about the future
 - Worry over
 - Self,
 - People close to them
 - Valued Possessions
- Hypervigilance
 - Constantly scan environment for danger
 - Always alert to potential threats – distractions
 - Cannot fall asleep

9

Other Symptoms

- Motor Tension
 - Unable to relax – stay keyed up
 - Motor tremors / shakes
 - Have strained facial expressions
 - Deep sighs, furrowed brow
 - Easily startled

10

Other Symptoms

- Automatic Reactivity
 - Sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems work overtime
 - Dizzy, sweating, heart racing or pounding
 - Hot / cold spells
 - Upset stomach
 - Lump in the throat
 - Frequent bathroom use
 - High pulse rate

11

Result

- Many individuals with anxiety disorders experience substance abuse problems
- Often are used to stop symptoms
 - Alcohol
 - Makes the person relax
 - Methamphetamine
 - Makes the person feel "Normal"

12

Treatment

- Is difficult to treat
- No clinical technique results in a cure
- Drug treatment
 - Long-term use
 - Often develop side effects
 - Develop tolerance
- Try to identify cues
 - Use negative reinforcement models to remove the fear.

13

Panic Attacks

14

Background

- Indicators
 - Are similar to generalized disorder.
 - Symptoms are sudden and magnified.
- Occurs more often in women
- Can differ in degree of incapacitation
- Usually no evidence for a childhood traumatic event
- Are heavy users of health care facilities and hospital emergency rooms

15

Symptoms

- Sudden, overwhelming, senseless terror
- Feeling of impending doom***
- Is an intense surge of anxiety that raises to a peak
- Can last a few seconds to days
- Can occur anywhere and at anytime
 - Movie
 - In bed
 - In cars

16

Panic Disorders

- Cued by a thought or particular stimulus
- May also have an intense fear of another panic attack
 - Anticipatory anxiety
 - Must occur for at least one month

17

Research

- Individuals see themselves at having impairments in their physical and emotional well being
- Depression is more common
- Alcoholism is more common
- Panic sufferers are more prone than the general population to think about committing suicide
 - 20% report attempting suicide

18

Cognitive Processes

- Include thoughts of
 - Humiliation
 - Losing control
 - Helplessness
 - Failure

19

Treatment

- Imipramine (used for depression)
 - Has been shown to help panic attacks not occur
 - Does not help anticipatory anxiety
- Thought blocking techniques with relaxation training also helpful
- Best seen from a biological and psychological perspective
 - Incorporate treatment from both areas

20