Best-practice Intervention Strategies

Anxiety

• Participate in a medical evaluation to rule out any medical conditions that may be causing or contributing to anxiety
• Participate in a psychiatric evaluation and take all medications as prescribed
• Develop and practice positive coping skills to manage stress and anxiety (adequate rest, proper nutrition, physical exercise and recreational activities/hobbies)
• Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and guided imagery
• Learn to recognize the difference between emotional and physical reactions to anxiety
• Participate in systematic desensitization of feared stimuli while practicing relaxation strategies
• Identify a social support team and increase participation in social activities
• Identify negative self-talk and replace with positive statements
• Involve family members in psycho-education about anxiety to increase understanding and support
• Recognize, verbalize and address unresolved emotional issues

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

• Participate in a psychiatric evaluation and take all medications as prescribed
• Use a thought stopping strategy to interrupt cognitive obsessions
• Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing
• Consider learning and practicing the Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP) technique by confronting feared situations and objects (exposure) and resist performing compulsive rituals (response prevention)
• Recognize, discuss, and refute dysfunctional beliefs (e.g., magical or catastrophic thinking patterns)
• Develop and practice a daily ritual to interfere with the current compulsive pattern
• Identify, verbalize and address unresolved life issues
• Provide psycho-education for family members and encourage their support for the patient during treatment
• Develop and practice positive self-talk

Compiled from multiple sources. Citations available upon request. Last Updated 1/27/11.