

Hypochondriac Disorder in OSMF Patient

Baba Sankar Sahu¹, Abhishek Ranjan Pati²

¹Intern, Institute of Dental Science, ²Associate Professor, Department of Oral Medicine & Radiology, Institute of Dental Science, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (Deemed to be University), Bhubaneswar 751003, Odisha, India

Abstract

The main purpose of this article is to present a review on oral submucous fibrosis patients, those who are suffering from hypochondriasis disorder and identifying its interrelationship with their family how they are also suffering due to this problem. The article also focuses on the sign and symptoms of this disorder. Also, it highlights the treatment planning of this disorder.

Keywords: Hypochondriasis, Oral submucous fibrosis, Sign and Symptoms, Management.

Introduction

Hypochondriac disorder means 'health anxiety', this is one kind of obsessive disorder that means obsession about a particular condition that may be medically diagnosed or undiagnosed. This usually occurs during adulthood. Oral Submucous fibrosis is a premalignant disorder of the oral cavity. It is a progressive and chronic disorder. The malignant alteration rate of oral submucous fibrosis (OSMF) into squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is high. OSMF is a multifactorial origin. The most important etiological factor is the habit of chewing tobacco, areca nut product like pan masala, etc. smoking also an important etiological factor for OSMF. Also, alkaloid arecoline identifies as a principal etiological factor for OSMF.¹ The sign and symptoms of OSMF are blanching present in the oral mucosa which leads to rigidity of the oral mucosa and gradually restrict the mouth opening. It occurs at any age but mainly occurs in the 2nd to 4th decade of life (25 to 35 years old). It commonly occurs in southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent. OSMF divides into different stages of grades, according to their clinical and functional criteria.²

Hypochondriac Disorder: Hypochondriac disorder means anxiety, where an individual is extremely concerned about having a severe disease in his/her body or oral cavity. So we are discussing hypochondriac disorder on OSMF patients. So etiological factor for oral submucous fibrosis is tobacco and nicotine products. So those are having a habit of chewing tobacco and other nicotine product, they are prone to OSMF. When the patient sees the initial sign and symptoms of this disease, they have started panic to see these signs and symptoms. And then repeatedly think about that and after a few days gradually he/she become depressed, so this is called hypochondriasis and a person with hypochondriasis is called a hypochondriac disorder.³

Hypochondriasis:

Other names: health anxiety (HA), hypochondria, illness anxiety, Disease, somatic symptom disease

Symptom: fear, anxiety, depression, mentally disturbance

Differential diagnosis: obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder, (OCD), generalized anxiety disorder

Treatment: However, hypochondriasis continues even after a dentist has examined an individual and reassured them about the disease and their symptoms, if the condition is severe then take an appropriate step for this disease. Many hypochondriac patients center of attention on a particular symptom as the catalyst of their

Corresponding Author:

Baba Sankar Sahu

Intern, Institute of Dental science, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (Deemed to be University), Bhubaneswar 751003, Odisha, India. (1st & Corresponding Author: e-mail: sahubaba065@gmail.com

upsetting such as palpitation, muscle fatigue, gastrointestinal problem, and also it affects the relationship with their family. To be eligible for the diagnosis of hypochondria disorder, the signs and symptoms must have been experienced for at least 6 months.⁴

Hypochondria disorder is characterized by the fear that minor bodily or mental symptoms may indicate a serious illness, continuously self-examination for example 'a person see white patches or white blanching in the mucosa of the oral cavity, then after the patient continuously see their oral cavity in the mirror or the phone's front camera' and then self-diagnosis by searching on the internet and this self-diagnosis enhances the patients' fear.⁵

Many persons with hypochondriasis express disbelief and doubt in the dentists' diagnosis, due to this doubtless and disbelief most patients judge the dentists and think this dentist doesn't know anything and then the patient goes for another dentist and then another. And gradually the patient becomes depressed. Many hypochondriac patients experience increased stress, blood pressure, anxiety in the occurrence of doctor/dentist, or nurse a condition known as "white coat syndrome". Most hypochondriac patients need continuous reassurance about their disease from the dentist or family or their friend. Some hypochondriac patients try to avoid any kind of reminder of an illness. Some patients constantly visit the dentist and frequently ask questions about their illness until their satisfaction. Some sufferers may never speak about it or don't express it in front of anybody anywhere.⁶

Signs and symptoms: Hypochondria disorder is a somatic amplification disease, this is a disorder of cognition and perception, it's a tendency to respond to the initial perception in a harmful manner and further debilitate. This manifests in many ways. Many people have several invasive thoughts and physical sensations that force them to check with family, friends, and dentist, for example, a person having severe headache may think that they have brain cancer. Most people are so afraid of any reminder of illness and some avoid thinking as a minor problem. Some also think that the disease is the penalty for past misdeeds.⁷

Hypochondria disorder is quite similar to the other kind of psychological disorder as like bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), clinical

depression, somatization disorder, phobias, and also generalized anxiety disorder. Most hypochondriac patients experience a cycle of invasive thought followed by a compulsive examination which is related to the signs and symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Some hypochondriac patients are worried about having illness and obsessive-compulsive disorder patients anxious about getting sick or of transmitting sickness to others. These kind patients are over-possessive and overprotective for themselves and also for others.⁸

Hypochondriac patients are more depressed and anxious to think about their symptoms but they don't aware that depression and anxiety cause the other mental and physical disorders or disease. For example hypochondriac patients experience change in appetite, weight fluctuation, fatigue, decrease the motivation of life, decrease interest to do something like extracurricular activity, or any kind of entertainment. And the most important thing is that this disorder not only affects the patient but also severely affect their family member due to the behavioral change of the patient. Because of this reason family members cannot tolerate the patient's behavior. Intense anxiety causes sweating, increased heartbeat, stomach discomfort, muscle tension, shortness of breath, dizziness, tingling, numbness in a certain part of the body like hand, forehead, etc.⁹

Effects on their life and their family: Above, we discussed oral submucous fibrosis, hypochondriac disorder and its sign and symptoms but now we are going to discuss the most important and the most sensitive topic that is how this disorder impact the patient's life and his/her family members. As we know the medication is the only way to treat this disorder but along with medication, we should assure them that don't think very much about this disease and strictly aware them about to stop bad habits like chewing nicotine products and don't see their oral cavity repeatedly in the mirror.¹⁰

Those patients don't follow the dentist's advice, they are suffering the most. As before when they repeatedly see their lesion present in their oral cavity, they don't control their habit, as a result, they become mentally unstable. Due to mentally unstable they could not focus on their day to day life and don't eat properly, etc. So in this time family member's support is the most important role. They should stand with them rather than leave them alone.^{11,12}

Complications¹³:

A hypochondriac disorder associated with:

1. Relation or family problems due to excessive worrying about the disease.
2. Excessive absences at work cause poor performance and other work-related problems.
3. Financial problems due to constant medical visits and their bills.
4. Problem function in day to day life.
5. Having also other psychological disorder such as somatic symptom disorder, depression, anxiety disorder, and personality disorder

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