

## Personality Disorders

Personality disorders: Inflexible, maladaptive patterns of thought, emotions, behavior, and interpersonal functioning that are stable over time and across situations and that deviate from the expectations of the individual's culture (page 350).

### Clusters of Personality Disorders:

**Table 13.6** The DSM-IV Classification of Major Personality Disorders.

 <p>Paranoid Personality Disorder</p>	<p><b>Odd, Eccentric Cluster</b></p> <p><i>Paranoid personality disorder</i>     Distrust, suspiciousness, oversensitivity</p> <p><i>Schizotypal personality disorder</i>     Intense discomfort in social situations; odd thinking, perception, communication, behaviors</p> <p><i>Schizoid personality disorder</i>     Detachment from social relationships, bland or limited expression of emotion</p>
 <p>Narcissistic Personality Disorder</p>	<p><b>Dramatic, Emotional, Erratic Cluster</b></p> <p><i>Histrionic personality disorder</i>     Attention seeking, overemotional, dramatic, shallow, seductive, suggestible</p> <p><i>Narcissistic personality disorder</i>     Grandiose sense of self-importance or uniqueness, need for constant attention and admiration, lacks empathy, preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success or power</p> <p><i>Antisocial personality disorder</i>     Antisocial behavior, violates or disregards rights of others, lying, stealing, irresponsibility, lack of remorse</p> <p><i>Borderline personality disorder</i>     Instability in various areas of life, tense and unstable relationships, recurrent suicide attempts, efforts to avoid being abandoned, unstable self-image/identity disturbance</p>
 <p>Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder</p>	<p><b>Anxious, Fearful Cluster</b></p> <p><i>Avoidant personality disorder</i>     Unwilling to enter into relationships unless guarantee of uncritical acceptance; social withdrawal; fear of social criticism or rejection; reluctant to take risks or try new things that may bring about embarrassment</p> <p><i>Dependent personality disorder</i>     Difficulty making everyday decisions; excessive reliance on and need for reassurance, support, nurturance from others; feels helpless when alone</p> <p><i>Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder</i>     Preoccupied with order, organization, rules, small details; perfectionistic; rigid and stubborn; overinvolved in work; inflexible</p>

(Source: From *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th ed., American Psychiatric Association, 2000)

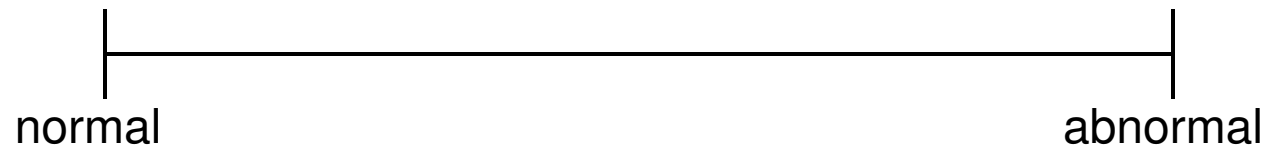
## Personality Disorders (page 551)

Odd, Eccentric Cluster	Dramatic, Emotional, Erratic Cluster	Anxious, Fearful Cluster
<p><b>Paranoid Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pervasive but unwarranted distrust and suspiciousness; assumes that other people intend to deceive, exploit, or harm them.</li> </ul> <p><b>Schizoid Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pervasive detachment from social relationships; emotionally cold and flat; indifferent to praise or criticism from others; preference for solitary activities; lacking in close friends.</li> </ul> <p><b>Schizotypal Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Odd thoughts, speech, emotional reactions, mannerisms, and appearance; impaired social and interpersonal functioning; often superstitious.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Antisocial Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blatantly disregards or violates the rights of others; impulsive, irresponsible, deceitful, manipulative, and lacking in guilt or remorse.</li> </ul> <p><b>Borderline Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intense, unstable relationships, emotions, and self-image; impulsive; desperate efforts to avoid real or imagined abandonment; feelings of emptiness; self-destructive tendencies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Histrionic Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exaggerated, overly dramatic expression of emotions and attention-seeking behavior that often includes sexually seductive or provocative behaviors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Narcissistic Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grandiose sense of self importance; exaggerates abilities and accomplishments; excessive need for admiration; boastful, pretentious; lacking in empathy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Avoidant Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extreme social inhibition and social avoidance due to feelings of inadequacy, and hypersensitivity to criticism, rejection, or disapproval.</li> </ul> <p><b>Dependent Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excessive need to be taken care of, leading to submissive, clinging behaviors; fears of separation; and the inability to assume responsibility.</li> </ul> <p><b>Obsessive–Compulsive Personality Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rigid preoccupation with orderliness, personal control, rules, or schedules that interferes with completing tasks; unreasonable perfectionism.</li> </ul>

## Personality Disorders

Characteristics involved in personality disorders are quite similar to normal variations in personality.

Personality disorders involve a cluster of characteristics. Many normal individuals have one or two of these characteristics (see definition). Only when they are a cluster and they are consistent across time and situations is where it might be a problem.



It is estimated that 10% of the general population has a personality disorder.

## Personality Disorders

Many display personality problems. Personality disorders usually begin in early childhood or adolescence. However, for most people, early personality problems often do not persist into adulthood. Only a small portion with early personality problems continue with these problems into adulthood.

- Most people with other disorders, especially a mood disorder, are often diagnosed with a personality disorder.
- People with a personality disorder are extremely difficult to get along with. As a result, these people have unstable work and social histories. Some sufferers are aware of the problem, but unable to change and commonly blame others for their problems.
- A common feature of personality disorders is a failure to take other people's perspective. People with personality disorders often blame others, society, or the universe for their difficulties, distorting their perceptions of the world in a way that makes the personality disorder "normal"—at least to them (page 529).
- Most people with a personality disorder won't admit to them. This makes diagnosis and treatment difficult.

## **Personality Disorders**

### Prevalence of personality disorders:

- 10% in the general population.

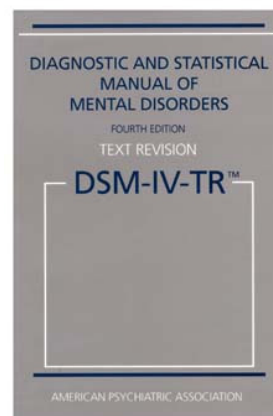
### Treatment:

- Medications have not been effective
- Psychotherapy is not very effective because people who seek psychotherapy must realize they have a problem and want to change. People with a personality disorder don't realize they have a problem and don't believe they need to change.

## **Anti-Social Personality Disorder**

Anti-social personality disorder: A personality disorder characterized by a pervasive pattern of disregard for and violation of the rights of others ([page 551](#)); impulsive, irresponsible, deceitful, manipulative, and lacks guilt or remorse.

- As children, they lie, steal, vandalize, setting fires, initiate fights, skip school, run away from home, and may be physically cruel to others and to animals.
- They often deceive and manipulate others for personal gain.
- By early adolescence they usually drink excessively, use drugs and engage in promiscuous sex.
- In adulthood, they cannot keep a job, act as a responsible parent, honor financial commitments or obey the law.
- They may be more impulsive
- About 4% of the general population has anti-social personality disorder with there being 3 times as many men as women with this disorder.

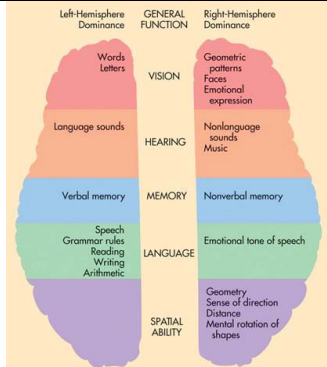
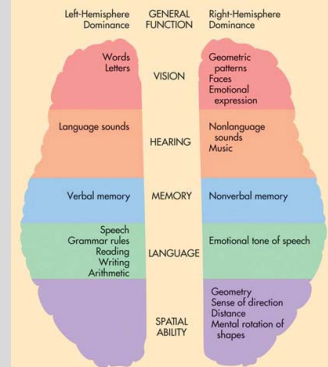

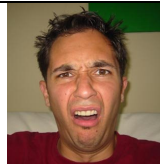




### Diagnostic criteria for 301.7 Antisocial Personality Disorder

- A. There is a pervasive pattern of disregard for and violation of the rights of others occurring since age 15 years, as indicated by three (or more) of the following:
- (1) failure to conform to social norms with respect to lawful behaviors as indicated by repeatedly performing acts that are grounds for arrest
  - (2) deceitfulness, as indicated by repeated lying, use of aliases, or conning others for personal profit or pleasure
  - (3) impulsivity or failure to plan ahead
  - (4) irritability and aggressiveness, as indicated by repeated physical fights or assaults
  - (5) reckless disregard for safety of self or others
  - (6) consistent irresponsibility, as indicated by repeated failure to sustain consistent work behavior or honor financial obligations
  - (7) lack of remorse, as indicated by being indifferent to or rationalizing having hurt, mistreated, or stolen from another
- B. The individual is at least age 18 years.  
C. There is evidence of Conduct Disorder with onset before age 15 years.  
D. The occurrence of antisocial behavior is not exclusively during the course of Schizophrenia or a Manic Episode.

## Anti-Social Personality Disorder

Brain imaging suggests that people with antisocial personality disorder do not comprehend the emotional significance of words and images. They have the same emotional response to neutral words (chair, table, stone) compared to emotionally charged words (cancer, rape, murder).

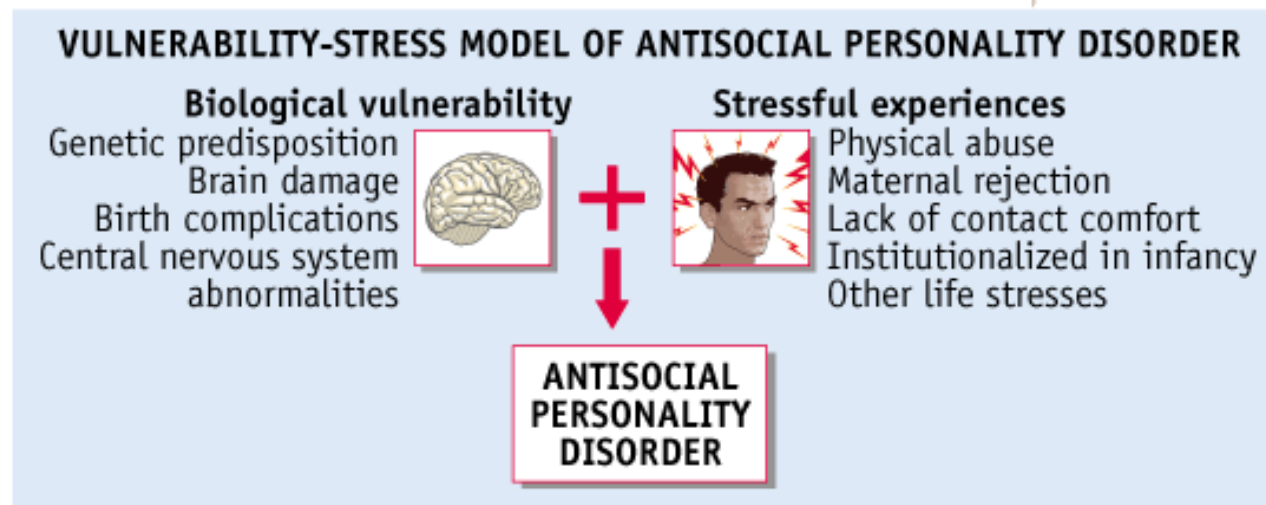
<b>Normal</b>		<b>Anti-social</b>	
			
Chair Table Stone	Cancer Rape Murder	Chair Table Stone	Cancer Rape Murder
No emotional reaction	<b>Emotional reaction</b>	No emotional reaction	No emotional reaction
			

In one study, 47% of the men and 21% of the women in prison were diagnosed with anti-social personality disorder.



## What factors are implicated in antisocial personality disorder?

- Childhood stress
- Substance abuse during childhood and adolescence
- Disrupted brain chemistry
- Poor parenting or pathological family environment
- Parent personality traits
- Genetic factors





## **Borderline Personality Disorders**

Borderline personality disorder: A personality disorder characterized by instability of interpersonal relationships, self-image and emotions, marked by impulsivity (page 553).

- It is estimated that 6% of Americans are affected by borderline personality disorder.
- Moods and emotions are intense, fluctuating, and extreme, often vastly out of proportion to the triggering incident, and seemingly uncontrollable (page 553).
- They are in constant need of reassurances of their self worth, and can suddenly become angry when it doesn't occur.
- Relationships inappropriately shift from ecstatic to hostile. They tend to view themselves and others in absolutes, rather than shades of grey (perfect or worthless, page 553).
- Once a relationship ends, the person with a borderline personality views the former lover or friend as a mortal enemy, though sometimes people with this disorder direct their negative emotions toward themselves by through self-destructive behavior.
- Threats of self-mutilations (pulling out their hair or making tiny cuts in their forearms) and suicide are common, especially in response to perceived rejection or abandonment

- Borderline personalities are likely to lack control of their impulses and may gamble, drive recklessly, abuse drugs or be sexually promiscuous. Depression, substance abuse and eating disorders are common.

A significant portion of patients with borderline personality disorder have histories of childhood abuse or disturbances in attachment relations. In addition, these people suffer from mood disorders as well.

Those with borderline personality disorder may also suffer from depression, substance abuse and eating disorders ([page 553](#)).

## **Major Types of Personality Disorders**

Paranoid personality disorder: Pervasive but unwarranted distrusts and suspiciousness, even when there is no evidence to support their suspicions.

- If a waitress miscalculates the total on his check, a person with paranoid personality disorder believes she is trying to rip him off.
- If a neighbor's trash blows into his yard, the person with the paranoid personality disorder is sure the neighbor dumped it there on purpose.

People with paranoid personality disorders are less likely to confide in others. They are afraid that the person is going to use the information against them (tell their competitor, significant other, etc.). They have little social support (see [Chapter 13](#)) when dealing with stressors.

Paranoid personalities have a strong tendency to blame others for their own shortcomings and often harshly critical of what they perceive as the shortcomings of colleagues, family and friends.