



Body Dysmorphic Disorder: Update on a Common, Impairing, and Underrecognized Disorder



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DATE



Tuesday April 2nd, 2024 | 7pm-8pm

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Content is appropriate for beginner, intermediate and advanced level practitioners.

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Abstract

Body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) is an often-debilitating disorder that is common but often missed or misdiagnosed in clinical practice. It consists of distressing or impairing preoccupation with perceived defects in appearance that are not observable or appear only slight to others, as well as excessive repetitive behaviors (e.g., mirror checking, grooming, skin picking) in response to appearance concerns. Patients typically experience marked impairment in psychosocial functioning and very poor quality of life. A high proportion experience suicidal ideation or attempt suicide, and rates of completed suicide appear markedly elevated. In fact, BDD appears to be characterized by significantly higher levels of suicidality than other psychiatric disorders that are characterized by high risk for suicidal thoughts and behavior. Dr. Phillips will review BDD's prevalence, key clinical features, possible etiologic factors, and how to diagnose BDD. She will also discuss treatment that is often received but not recommended (i.e., cosmetic treatment) as well as evidence-based pharmacologic and psychosocial treatments that are effective for most patients with BDD.

Biography

Katharine Phillips, M.D., is Professor of Psychiatry, DeWitt Wallace Senior Scholar, and Residency Research Director at Weill Cornell Medical College, and Attending Psychiatrist at New York-Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Phillips is internationally recognized for her clinical and research expertise in body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) and OCD. She has been conducting research studies and treating patients with BDD for more than 30 years. She has published most of the medication studies of BDD, and she has co-developed and tested CBT for BDD. Her scientific studies on BDD were continuously funded by the National Institute of Mental Health for more than 20 years. She has published more than 360 articles and chapters in scientific journals and books, and she has authored or edited 11 books, including multiple books on BDD. Dr. Phillips has given more than 600 presentations around the world and more than 500 media interviews. She has received many honors and awards for her research, clinical work, and other academic contributions. Her awards for her research studies on BDD include a Special Presidential Commendation from the American Psychiatric Association and the Outstanding Career Achievement Award from the International OCD Foundation.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe key clinical features of BDD.
2. Identify key components of CBT for BDD.
3. Describe steps to providing effective pharmacotherapy for BDD.

Suggested Reading

1. Phillips, K. A., Keshaviah, A., Dougherty, D. D., Stout, R. L., Menard, W., & Wilhelm, S. (2016). Pharmacotherapy relapse prevention in body dysmorphic disorder: A double-blind, placebo-controlled trial. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 173(9), 887–895. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.2016.15091243>
2. Wilhelm, S., Phillips, K. A., Greenberg, J. L., O'Keefe, S. M., Hoepfner, S. S., Keshaviah, A., Sarvode-Mothi, S., & Schoenfeld, D. A. (2019). Efficacy and posttreatment effects of therapist-delivered cognitive behavioral therapy vs supportive psychotherapy for adults with body dysmorphic disorder: A randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Psychiatry*, 76(4), 363–373. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2018.4156>
3. Hoepfner, S. S., Hall, M. D., Hiranandani, M., Greenberg, J. L., Wilhelm, S., & Phillips, K. A. (2024). Time to response in therapy for body dysmorphic disorder: A comparison of cognitive behavioral therapy and supportive psychotherapy. *Behavior Therapy*, 55(1), 68–79. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beth.2023.05.006>