

Psychiatric disorders

Psychiatric disorders can be divided into **organic** and **functional**. **Dementia** is a mental disorder due to organic brain disease. The commonest form of dementia is that associated with old age: **senile dementia**. Disorders in which there is no obvious pathology or anatomical change in an organ are termed functional. These are described below.

Substance abuse

Abuse of a substance means using it in a way that is harmful. The commonest forms of substance abuse are **alcoholism** and **drug abuse**.

Affective Disorders

Here is an extract from a medical textbook:

<p>Affect and mood are similar in meaning and refer to the emotions (for example, happiness or sadness). Affect tends to be used for temporary emotions, and is expressed through manner of speaking, facial expression, or behaviour. Mood is used to refer to a more permanent emotional state. The most common form of affective disorder is depression, the symptoms of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor appetite or significant weight loss • sleep disturbance (for example, insomnia – inability to sleep) • fatigue (loss of energy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psychomotor agitation (excessive movement and thought) or psychomotor retardation (slowing of movement and thought) • loss of interest in stimulating activities • decreased ability to think and concentrate • feeling that one is of no value to others, or that one has done something wrong • recurrent thoughts of death or suicide <p>Five, or possibly four, of the above symptoms, occurring nearly every day for at least two weeks, constitute a major depression.</p>
--	---

Neurotic and stress-related disorders

An example of a neurotic disorder is **obsessive compulsive disorder**. An **obsession** is an idea that is so persistent that it interferes with the patient's life. A **compulsion** is an obsessive idea that forces the patient to act even though they recognize that it is unnecessary. A common form of this is compulsive washing of the hands. **Stress** is a feeling of being unable to cope. It can lead to **anxiety** or fear of problems. A sudden attack of anxiety is called a **panic attack**.

Other types of functional disorder

These include:

- **behavioural syndromes** associated with physiological disturbance (such as **eating disorders**)
- disorders of adult personality and behaviour (for example, **personality disorder**)
- **mental retardation** – delayed mental development
- schizophrenia and other disorders in which there are **delusions** (false beliefs).

Complete the table with words from the above text.

Noun	Adjective
	affective
	anxious
	behavioural
	demented
	disturbed
	suicidal

Make word combinations using a word from each box. Two words can be used twice.

behavioural
eating
major
mental
personality
psychomotor
sleep
substance

abuse
disturbance
retardation
disorder
depression
syndrome

Complete the sentences. Look at the above text to help you.

- 1 The way a person behaves is his or her _____.
- 2 A persistent emotional state is a _____.
- 3 A sudden attack of anxiety is a _____.
- 4 The form of dementia associated with ageing is called _____.
- 5 A disorder which is not associated with pathological changes is _____.
- 6 An idea which forces a patient to repeat unnecessary actions is a _____.

Which symptoms of depression was this patient suffering from?

Case 41
A 56-year-old woman presented to her GP complaining of increasing tiredness over the past few months. She had lost interest in most things. She was sleeping poorly and tended to wake up early, but denied any suicidal tendencies. She was thirsty and was passing urine more often. She was eating normally and her weight was steady.

Express your idea.

Do you think the woman in the above case (Case 41) was suffering from major depressive illness? Give your reasons.