Cat Lovers and Hoarders in Late Life

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Educational Objectives

• Participants will;
  – Know the DSM IV diagnostic criteria for Compulsive Hoarding
  – Recognize the risk factors for Compulsive Hoarding
  – Know the Health Implications of Compulsive Hoarding
  – Know the potential treatment options for Compulsive Hoarding
Compulsive Hoarding

- Acquisition of a large number of possessions
- Failure to discard possessions
- Clutter that precludes activities of daily living

Frost and Hartl 1996

Famous Hoarders

- Langley Collyer (1885-1947)
Langley Collyer

• March 21, 1947
  – Homer Collyer found starved to death amid debris and tunnels
  – 18 days later Langley found dead suffocated by debris

Langley Collyer

• 136 tons of junk
  – grand pianos
  – human medical specimens
  – chassis of a Model-T Ford
  – a library of thousands of medical and engineering books
  – an armory of weapons
  – a horse drawn carriage
  – countless old newspapers;
  – a primitive X-Ray machine;
  – 34 bank deposit books with the balance totaling $3,007.18.
DSM IV Criteria for Hoarding?

• No specific DSM IV criteria

• Frequently considered subtype of OCD
  – Two questions from YBOCS

• OCPD
  – Difficulty discarding worthless objects
    • Consider OCD

OCD and Hoarding

• 38% of OCD pt have clinically significant hoarding
• Five times as many hoarders as OCD patients
• OCD literature frequently considers OCD patient with hoarding; poor prognosis
• Some case reports and case series indicate hoarding may respond to SSRI similar to OCD

Rachman 2009
Kessler 2005
Storch 2008
OCD and Hoarding

- Most hoarding studies are in patients with hoarding associated with OCD
- Hoarding treatment tends to focus on hoarding in OCD

Neuroimaging and neuropsychological studies

- Neurobiologically distinct from OCD
  - Anterior cingulate cortex
  - Ventral and medial prefrontal cortex
- Decision-making
- Attention
- Emotional regulation

Saxena 2008
Ida Mayfield Wood (Emma Walsh)
1839-1932

- New York Daily News owner in 1899
- Lived with two daughters in squalor for 30 years, (1901-1931)
  - $750,000 stashed in odd places such as pots and pans and in a pouch secured to her waist, as well as shoeboxes filled with yellowed securities worth thousands of dollars and, legend has it, a diamond necklace in a cracker box.

Historical Dialogue

- James 1918
  - Appropriation or Acquisitiveness = basic instinct
- G.Stanley Hall 1886
  - 90% of young boys have a collection of some sort
- Fromm 1947
  - Acquisition constitutes a core aspect of character
- Freud 1908
  - Result of anal fixation
    - Orderliness, obstinacy and parsimony
  - Hoarding of money is the symbolic equivalent of fecal retention
Edmund Trebus (1919-2002)

• Fought an epic battle against Haringey Council in North London to remain in his rubbish-filled house and garden
• BBC documentary *A Life of Grime*
• Clearing his garden required five large trucks and 11 dumpsters and cost more than £30,000
• Used Ladders to get in and out of his house
Animal Models

- Many animals hoard food stores
  - Birds
  - Rodents
- Survival advantage for variable food supplies

Edith and Edie Bouvier Beale

- Lived in squalor in a 28-room East Hampton mansion
- Documentary "Grey Gardens." by David and Albert Maysles
- Aunt and first cousin of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis
Epidemiology

- 10.6 million Compulsive Hoarders in U.S.
- 8000 self identified subjects;
  - 93.5% Female
  - 89.9% White
  - Average age 49.18 (+/-10.4)

Frost 2009

Compulsive Hoarding

Tolin 2008
Hoarding co-morbidities

- Schizophrenia
- Social phobia
- Eating Disorders
  - Starvation
- Depression
- Organic Mental Disorders
- Dementia

Steketee and Frost, 2003

Compulsive Hoarding

- The acquisition of and failure to discard large numbers of possessions.
  - Excessive acquisition
  - Irrational emotional attachment
  - Vigilant protection of the collection
  - Emotional and behavioral resistance to discarding the objects
  - Cluttered living conditions

Rachman 2009
Compulsive Hoarding

- Acquisition of a large number of possessions
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Frost and Hartl 1996

Excessive acquisition

- Present in 85.5 - 94.7% of hoarders
  - Compulsive buying
  - Collecting free possessions
- Stealing case reports
  - Kleptomania
- Lack of excess acquisition correlated with older age.

Frost et al 2009
Compulsive Buying 61.1- 74%

- 50% of Compulsive buyers meet criteria for hoarding
- 72.6% of Buyers also collect free possessions
- Hoarders with compulsive buying
  - Younger
  - More money
  - More likely to be female
  - More work impairment
  - Correlates with clutter

Collecting free things 57.4%

- Predicts younger onset of hoarding
- Correlates with lower confidence in decision making
  - …But I might need it!
- 93% of free collectors also compulsively buy

Frost et. al. 2009
Failure to Discard Possessions

- Information processing deficits
  - Decision making deficits
  - Defects in organization or categorization
  - Defects in memory

Frost, Hardtl 1996

Failure to Discard Possessions

- Emotional attachment problems
  - Pure Sentimentality
  - Safety signals
    - “What if I need it?”

Frost, Hardtl 1996
Failure to Discard Possessions

• Behavioral avoidance
  – Avoid decision (avoid mistakes)
  – Avoid emotional upset
  – Avoid the increasing work of clean-up

Frost, Hardtl 1996

Commonly Hoarded Items

Frost 2000
Clutter in Hoarding

Impairment in ADLS

Frost 2000
Quentin Crisp

- “There is no need to do any housework at all. After the first four years the dirt doesn't get any worse. It is simply a matter of not losing one's nerve.”
  - Quentin Crisp

Hoarding Complaints

- Neighbors 52%
- Police 47%
- Social Services 19%
- Service Personnel 16%

Frost 2000
**Hoardi ng Complaints**

- Sanitation/accumulation: 88%
- Fire hazard: 67%
- Odor: 53%
- Odd behavior: 38%

Frost 2000

**Family Burden-Patient Rejection**

- Negative attitudes from family
  - Critical, hostile or emotionally over-involved
- Correlates with severity of hoarding
- Equals that of Schizophrenia
- Predicts poor response and relapse after treatment

Tolin 2008
Animal Hoarding

- Accumulation of a large number of animals
- Failure to provide minimal standards of nutrition, sanitation and veterinary care
- Failure to act on deteriorating conditions
Animal Hoarding

- 76-83.1% female
- Median age 55
- 50% Single person households
- Median animals 39-50
  - more than 100 animals
- 80% of cases poor condition or dead animals

Patronek 1999
Hoard of Animals Research Consortium 2002

Animal Hoarding

- Most to all animal hoarders also hoard non-animal possessions
  - Significantly worse sanitary conditions
  - More threats to individual’s health
  - Greater number of agencies involved

Frost 2000
HOARC 2002
Animal Hoarding

- 11% of residences condemned
- 26% of animal hoarders institutionalized
- Zoonotic infections
  - Salmonella
  - Fleas
- Toxic environments
  - Ammonia

HOARC 2002

Animal vs Non-Animal

Frost 2000
Animal Hoarding

- Accumulation
  - Buying
  - Adopting (free accumulation)
  - Breeding

Animal Hoarding

- Reasons for Accumulating
  - To save the animals 67.6%
  - Loves the animals 80.3%
  - No one else would care for them 52.1%
  - Surrogate children 36.6%
  - Animals as only friends 39.4%
Animal Hoarding

- Types of animals hoarded
  - Cats: 65%
  - Dogs: 60%
  - Farm animals: 11%
  - Birds: 11%

Patronek 1999

Hoardng and elderly

- 40% of hoarding complaint to Health Department (Steketee 2001)
- Clutter increases risk for falls (Frost 1999)
- Impedes emergency access (Frost 1996)
- 85% of elderly have no insight into problem (Frost 2000)
- 23% of dementia patients have significant hoarding (Hwang 1998)
- Risk factor for self neglect (Pavlou 2008)
Elderly Hoarders

- Female 73%
- White 90%
- Unmarried 84%
  - Never married 55%
    - Base rate of never married=5%
- Live alone 82%

Steketee 2001

Clutter in Elderly Hoarding

- Types of Hoarded Items:
  - Newspaper
  - Paper
  - Containers
  - Clothing
  - Food
  - Books
  - Trash

Steketee 2001
Cluttered living conditions

- Increased risk of falls
- Fire Hazard
- Contamination from rotting food
- Eviction from living quarters
- Financial burden
- Public Health Burden

Interference with Normal Function

Stekete 2001
Access to services

- Clutter interfered with services in 63% of cases
  - 5% no services could be delivered

Physical Safety

- 81% of homes had physical health threat related to hoarding
- 45% Fire Hazard
  - Flammable materials
  - Blocked exits
Self Care

- 64% difficulty with self care
  - 33% moderately to substantially dirty
  - 17% extremely filthy
  - 25% overpowering body odor
- 90% moderately to extremely filthy home
- 66% moderate to overpowering odors in the home

Steketee 2001

Sanitary Conditions

- 33% infestations, feces and rotten food

Steketee 2001
Self Neglect in Older Adults

- Persistent inattention to personal hygiene and/or environment
- Repeated refusal of indicated services which can reasonably be expected to improve quality of life
- Self-endangerment through the manifestation of unsafe behaviors
  - Wound care, medications, etc

Hoarding and the Elderly

- Diogenes syndrome (senile squalor syndrome)
  - Gross Self Neglect
  - Domestic Squalor
  - Hoarding of Trash
  - 0.5/1000 in 60 or older

Clark 1975
Turner 1997
Self Neglect

• Increased Morbidity
  – Nursing home placement HR 5.23
• Increased Mortality
  – OR 1.7
• Most common referral to Adult Protective Services
  – 2004 National APS survey

Pavlou 2008

Hoarding Interventions Elderly

• Involuntary cleaning
  – Partial/Complete
  – 1/3 effective
• Supportive counseling
  – Effective 1 in 6
• Nursing home placement

Steketee 2001
Hoarding Interventions Elderly

- Cognitive Behavior Therapy
  - Motivational enhancement
  - Collaborative model building
  - Sorting of possessions
  - Non-acquisition
- Reduced hoarding 25-34%
- Reduced clutter 23-33%
- Much or very much improved 57%

Frost, Tolin 2008

Pharmacotherapy for Hoarding

- SSRI
  - 12 weeks high dose
  - OCD hoarding studies only
- Atypical antipsychotics
  - Adjuncts to SSRI non-responsive
  - OCD hoarding studies only
- Naltrexone
  - Animal model
Hoarding and the Elderly

- Approximately 50% of hoarders are 60 or older
- Older hoarders tend to be;
  - Female
  - Unmarried and live alone
  - Have poor insight
  - Refractory to intervention
  - High risk for severe self neglect

Learning Objectives

- DSM IV criteria
  - Non-existent
  - Contradictory DSM nosology

- Risk Factors
  - Female sex
  - Older age
  - Never married
  - Compulsive buyers
Learning Objectives

• Health implications
  – Falls risk
  – Safety concerns
  – Severe self neglect syndrome
  – Zoonotic infections

• Treatment options
  – Psychotherapy
  – Pharmacotherapy
  – Social services intervention
  – Institutionalization