Case Report:

“Comorbidity of a case with traits of schizotypal personality with animal hoarding”

Sara Hosseinpoor1, Reza Bidaki2*, Seyyed Razi Ghalebi3, Saeed Jalili4, Seyyed Mohammad Mahdi Mirhosseini1, Fateme Akrami Mohajeri5, Ahmad Pourrashidi Boshrabadi6

1. Medical student, Isfahan university of medical sciences, Isfahan, Iran
2. Assis Prof of psychiatry, Rafsanjan University of medical sciences, Rafsanjan, Iran
3. Assis Prof. Cardiovascular Reasearch Center, Afshar Hospital, ShahidSadooghi University of Medical Science, Yazd, Iran
4. Medical Student, Shahrekord university of medical sciences, Isfahan, Iran
5. Assis Prof. Occupational Environment Center, Rafsanjan University of Medical Science, Rafsanjan, Iran
6. Medical Student, Rafsanjan University of Medical Sciences, Rafsanjan, Iran

Corresponding author: Reza Bidaki, Email: Reza_bidaki@yahoo.com

Abstract:

There is so few number of case reports in the field and those which exist, are mostly with the focus on animal hoarding and OCDs relationship, but almost no case of hoarding accompanied by schizotypal disorders have been reported. In this case report, we will highlight comorbidity between a personality trait and a type of obsessive-compulsive disorder A 38 years old single male that is a schizotypal trait as DSM-IV criteria and he interested for keeping various and uncommon animals and their pictures. In this study we introduce a man that keeps odd and unexpected animals like sables, tortoises, weasels and lots of other animals. At the same time he could not provide them with favorable condition so they die or become ill. We can conclude the schizotypal personality may present as animal hoarding. Thus we need a precise history of patients and schizotypal personality should be considered.

Keywords: schizotypal, animal hoarding, Obsessional trait

Introduction

Hoarding which is mostly explained as a common sign of mental psychological problem, rather than intended animal persecution, is a problematic form of behavior in which the person acquires a large number of different possessions. He buys, keeps and stores in such an ill way that interferes with his daily activities (1).

Comorbidities were including major depressive disorder (MDD) and impulse control disorders (compulsive buying, kleptomania, and pyromania). Fewer than 20% of hoarders achieved criteria for Obsessive-Compulsive disorder (OCD), and the rate of OCD in hoarders was higher in men rather than women. Rates of MDD and impulse control disorders were higher among hoarders than OCD subjects. Anxiety disorders were not more frequent in hoarders, but social phobia was more frequent among hoarders than OCD patients. Inattention deficit type of ADHD was diagnosed in 28% of hoarders and was more than patients with OCD (3%) (2).

If hoarding is severe, it should consider diagnosis of OCD and obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD). It seems that compulsive hoarding to be
separate from other neurological and psychiatric disorders (like OCPD and OCD) (3). Some of hoarders have at least an episode of TLE. They have higher hoarding symptoms severity than those hoarders not exposed to trauma (4).

Many compulsive hoarders also suffer from compulsive buyers. Hoarding compulsive buyers reported more severe buying symptoms and obsessive-compulsive symptoms and presented with a higher psychiatric co-morbidity like mood, anxiety and eating disorder (5). To be considered as clinically significant, hoarding behavior must cause significant distress or impairment in functioning (6). Hoarding is a symptom of OCD in 20–30% of instances, but frequently wasn't been recognized (7).

We intend to introduce an animal hoarder man that keeps odds, strange and unexpected animals that are problematic for interpersonal relationship and social function.

Case report

A 38 years old single male of middle class socioeconomic status, with academic education in animal sciences is introduced. He has a strange and exclusive life. The trait of schizotypal personality disorder is detected as DSM-IV – TR criteria. It is based on clinical examination and MMPI test. He was graduated with a PHD in animal sciences, as a veterinarian. He is known to be an idealistic, perfectionist character and obsessional personality trait, fascinated by nature and extremely obsessed with details. When his thesis finished in 2000 pages and this is considered by his psychologist as a clear sign of his obsession, perfectionism and odd behavior. The familial history of animal hoarding and OCD spectrum was not absent.

He was normal in most of his psychological examinations, either in most of the items of Yale-Brown Obsessive-Compulsive Scale (YBOCS), except for the hoarding item. Neuroimaging wasn't done. As mentioned, no sign of depression or any other psychological problem was diagnosed. He lives lonely.

His hoarding behavior started in childhood period, in most days and it progressed insidiously. It is no considerable until high school. It is stress related. Following anxiety states, it is triggered and accelerated.

He kept odds and unexpected animals like sables, tortoises, weasels, and lots of other animals both at home and in his work place. He could not provide them with even minimum level of care and sanity, so they get ill or die. Despite several serious massages he got from health control committee to remove his animals, he has still no fortune to discard the habit. He has no past history of psychotic behavior or experiences.

Discussion

Animal hoarding is diagnosed by four criteria including 1) failure to prepare the good condition such as sanitation, nutrition and veterinary care for the animals, 2) inability to find the complications of this failure on the environment, animal welfare and other members of household, 3) obsessive efforts to collect the animals, and 4) limitation in living conditions for people and animals (8).

Although a hoarder may feel that he/she loves animals, but he/she can be blind to the fact that not only, can’t keep up with his/her pets health and sanity, but also reluctant to take any responsibly, even in the case of starvation and death. Animals are mostly left in crowded environment where suffer from malnourishment, illness, inactivity, poor ventilation, and lack of human companionship. The characteristics of schizotypal personality includes
disturbance, odd and eccentric behavior, and also unable or reluctant to bond or have close relationship with other persons. The person has inappropriate or constricted affect, odd beliefs or magical thinking, odd behavior, odd speech, anxiety in social situations, and cognitive or perceptual distortions.

In a study, 76% of hoarders were female, and 46% were older than 60 years. 50% of the hoarders lived lonely. The animals include farm, cats, dogs, and birds. The median number of animals per case was 39, but there were 4 cases of more than hundred animals in a household. In 80% of cases animals were reportedly found dead or were kept in poor status (9).

Present case is a middle age man who lives lonely. Our case had the symptoms of schizotypal personality such as disturbance, odd and eccentric behavior and also he had all criteria for animal hoarding.

There is also so few number of case reports in the field and those which exist, are mostly with the focus on animal hoarding and OCDs relationship, but almost no case of hoarding accompanied by schizotypal disorders have been reported. Compulsive hoarding is part of a discrete clinical syndrome that includes difficulty discarding, perfectionism, urges to save, excessive acquisition, indecisiveness, procrastination, disorganization, and avoidance. Compulsive hoarding is a genetically discrete, strongly heritable phenotype. Neuropsychological and neuroimaging studies are elucidating its neurobiology, implicating dysfunction of ventral and medial prefrontocortical areas that mediate decision making, attention, and regulation of emotion. Effective treatments include pharmacotherapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) (10).

Conclusion
In this article, we show the comorbidity between schizotypal personality and animal hoarding while before this time it is not reported such comorbidity. We can conclude the schizotypal personality may present as animal hoarding. Thus we need a precise history of patients and schizotypal personality should be considered.

Acknowledgement
We would offer our kindest regards for this person who agreed to participate in our study. He was completely filled in with our exact manuscript and after wellbeing informed, generously accepted to cooperate.

References

Date of submission: 12 April 2013
Date of provisional acceptance: 04 May 2013
Date of Final acceptance: 01 July 2013
Date of Publication: 03 July 2013
Source of support: Nil; Conflict of Interest: Nil