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Title page
Invited Perspective

Age-specific Prevalence of Hoarding and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: A Population-based Study

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Hoarding disorder (HD) is defined as the acquisition of and persistent difficulty in parting with possessions, leading to excessive clutter. In 2013, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-5) named HD as a distinct disorder within the obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and related disorders category (1). Research supports this change and has indicated that hoarding behavior is present in about 20% of individuals with clinically significant OC symptoms and individuals with hoarding symptoms by in large do not have OC symptoms (83%; 2).

Little is known about the course and prevalence of HD across the lifespan (3). There is a range of published prevalence estimates for hoarding (1.5-6%) (2, 4-5), with typically lower reported prevalence in studies of children and adolescents (6). Furthermore, some studies have found a progressive course (7), suggesting that HD and aging should be investigated.

The aim of this investigation was to describe the prevalence and severity, by age and sex, of hoarding and OC symptoms in a large epidemiological population-based sample. Participants were adults in the Netherlands Twin Register (NTR), an epidemiological (population-based) sample of adults that includes twin pairs and extended family (spouses, parents, children, and siblings) who had data available for hoarding and OC symptoms. A total of 15,194 participants completed one or both of the OCS and hoarding scales.

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