

POV: YOU'RE  
ABOUT TO HAVE  
YOUR FIRST  
EXPOSURE  
RESPONSE  
PREVENTION (ERP)  
SESSION AND  
DON'T KNOW  
WHAT TO EXPECT



Department of Psychiatry

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS**

# What to Expect in Your First Session with an OCD Therapist

The first therapy session is a chance for you and your therapist to get to know one another. Your therapist will take the time to ask you questions about yourself, your history, and your OCD symptoms. They may do assessments with you to get a baseline reading of your OCD symptoms and they may also take some time to assess your distress tolerance skills. Your therapist will may spend some of the session providing you with psychoeducation about OCD and ERP.

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## THINGS TO EXPECT IN FUTURE SESSIONS

- More Psychoeducation
- Introducing and reviewing distress tolerance skills
- Building a hierarchy
- Doing exposures
- Assigning and reviewing ERP homework
- Identifying and addressing avoidance
- Having your support system (e.g. family, partner, friend etc) join a psychoeducation session to plan on reducing accommodation of your OCD





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## Exposure Response Prevention...

- Helps patients change their relationship with anxiety and distress, without avoidance or focusing on getting rid of the distress and thoughts
- Gradually exposes patients to fears/obsessions while also having patients refrain from compulsions/rituals
- Focuses on reducing patterns of avoidance related to fear responses
- Aims to decrease the association between physiological and psychological reactions and the need to perform safety behaviors/compulsions



**BRAIN HEALTH** for all, for life.

*Hemendinger2022*

## Remember...

Starting any type of therapy can be difficult and anxiety provoking.

Get therapy a fair chance before you decide it's not for you

Be patient with yourself and the therapeutic process

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**The OCD Program currently offers 1x/week individual therapy, group therapy options, and medication management.**

**Our goal is to provide evidenced based treatment to help support you in managing your OCD.**

**If you are interested please contact our Clinical Director, Emily Hemendinger at [Emily.Hemendinger@CUAnschutz.edu](mailto:Emily.Hemendinger@CUAnschutz.edu)**