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Histrionic Personality Disorder
M2 Psychiatry Sequence
Cluster B Personality Disorders

Histrionic Personality Disorder

- “A pattern of excessive emotionality and attention seeking.” (DSM-IV)
Histrionic Personality Disorder

Diagnostic Criteria for Histrionic Personality Disorder (DSM-IV)

A pervasive pattern of excessive emotionality and attention seeking, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts, as indicated by five (or more) of the following:

1. is uncomfortable in situations in which he or she is not the center of attention
2. interaction with others is often characterized by inappropriate sexually seductive or provocative behavior
3. displays rapidly shifting and shallow expression of emotions
4. consistently uses physical appearance to draw attention to self
5. has a style of speech that is excessively impressionistic and lacking in detail
6. shows self-dramatization, theatricality, and exaggerated expression of emotion
7. is suggestible, i.e., easily influenced by others or circumstances
8. considers relationships to be more intimate than they actually are
Histrionic Personality Disorder

Clinical Vignettes
Histrionic Personality Disorder

- Prevalence: 2-3% of population
- Sex ratio: F>M
- Comorbidity: Somatization and conversion disorders, depression, anxiety
- Family: Cluster B disorders
Histrionic Personality Disorder

Treatment

- Psychotherapy - Dynamic therapy is the treatment of choice
- Medication - Antidepressants and anxiolytics may help comorbid depression and anxiety
Histrionic Personality Disorder

Physician-patient Interaction

• Overly dependent or seductive behavior is common
• A dramatic presentation may obscure the differences between major and minor physical problems
• Rapid fluctuation between overwhelming anxiety about a medical problem and total indifference is common.