

THE RELEVANCE OF PSYCHODIAGNOSTIC METHODS
IN A CONTINUING PANDEMIC

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Introduction. It is not an exaggeration to say that at present, when the World Health Organization announced the coronavirus pandemic, most people are in constant stress because of worries about the risk of getting sick, disruption of their usual lifestyle, and fear of the future. Despite the fact that in all countries unprecedented security measures are being taken, the media do not stop warning about the threat of the disease's further spread, and the number of sick and dead around the world is increasing every day. In this situation, it is important not to panic, to remain calm and at the same time not to go to the other extreme - carelessness and ignoring the existing risk of infection.

Aim. Developing psychodiagnostic measures aimed at identifying potential mental health risks, with further psycho-hygienic correction of the state of excessive anxiety.

Materials and methods. To achieve aim of this study, there were used such methods as biblio-semantic, sociological, psychological, medical-statistical.

Results. According to data of research, in current situation it is important not to panic, to remain calm and at the same time not to go to the other extreme - carelessness and ignoring the existing risk of infection. To maintain calm, it is necessary to assess the current situation soberly and to separate the factors that we can influence and those that we are not in control of for ourselves.

We are unable to cancel the epidemic, but it is in our power to focus on taking reasonable security measures - to wear a medical mask, do not forget to wash our hands and face, and avoid crowded places. Fear of the virus should be just reasonable, because excessive anxiety can lead to disturbance of not only mental, but also somatic health.

The fear of death and illness inevitably follow us throughout life, but it must be just reasonable, because excessive anxiety leads to disorders of not only mental, but also somatic health. Obsessive thoughts about a possible infection, an ongoing discussion of the epidemic, and listening to disturbing news every minute leads to the fact that more and more neural connections responsible for remembering frightening information are gradually being laid in the brain. As a result, negative attitudes are formed that quietly command our body. Indeed, in the end, all the processes, including the work of the immune system, are “in charge” of the brain.

That is, if you fear too much, the brain programs the body to get sick, and immunity really decreases. It is known that panic and fear greatly contribute to the spread and worsening of the incidence of viral infections, because during fear a lot of stress hormone, cortisol, is produced. It literally paralyzes the immune system, suppresses defense and control mechanisms: inhibits the synthesis of T-and B-lymphocytes, disrupts the activation of macrophages and the production of interleukins. And endorphins -hormones of joy and satisfaction -activate and protect the immune system vessels, the load on which is so high in infections.

Moreover, in a situation when the panic is growing, we begin to unconsciously sabotage the necessary security measures -we forget to wash our hands, accidentally leave the medical mask at home before traveling in transport, and constantly touch our face. This happens because there is a psychological mechanism that normally helps the body cope with fear -to stop being afraid, you need to quickly live through the frightening event and leave it in the past. That is why dangerous situations subconsciously often seem attractive to us. The same thing happens in the case of a spreading epidemic -the subconscious mind gives the installation: in order to cope with an excessive fear of the disease, you must already get infected and get sick! Therefore, the medical mask and antibacterial gel remain forgotten at home. Fear is a protective reaction of the body. It makes us avoid danger. But this is only true if fear is not excessive. To determine the degree of its severity, you can use a simple autopsychodiagnostic technique. You need to seclude, create conditions for yourself, when at least for a short period of time nothing will distract you from this activity, and prepare a sheet of paper and a pen (pencil). Then close your eyes and focus on your feeling of fear -honestly admit that it exists, try to visualize it in the form of a creature or image, feel exactly where the tension arises in the body when thinking of a disturbing situation. Then draw a scale from zero to ten on a piece of paper (it is important to do this clearly, not mentally) and evaluate your fear. If it is more than six, you need to work on your condition, because it is already capable of harming your health.

Conclusion. The proposed technique is simple to implement and quite effective. In addition, there are several quite effective psycho-hygienic methods of dealing with excessive anxiety. But it's necessary keep in mind that any psychological technique is not a magic pill of instant action. All these exercises will be effective only if to repeat them regularly.