

DO YOU HAVE BODY DYSMORPHIC DISORDER?

BDD is an obsessive preoccupation with a real or imagined defect in one's physical appearance. The OCD Centre of Los Angeles has devised this test to identify traits.

1. I worry excessively about my appearance.
2. I often check my appearance in mirrors or other reflecting objects.
3. I frequently avoid mirrors.
4. I perform basic grooming (washing skin, combing hair) excessively, related to my perceived flaw.
5. I often use make-up or clothing (ie, scarves, long-sleeved shirts, etc) to camouflage my perceived flaw.
6. I frequently attempt to hide my perceived flaw by using my hands, by sitting in certain positions, or by staying in places where I believe the flaw will be less noticeable by others.
7. I regularly scrutinise others' appearance.
8. I sometimes discuss my perceived flaw with others, or ask others to verify my perceived flaw.
9. I often seek reassurance from others about the appearance of my perceived flaw.
10. I often touch and/or measure my perceived flaw.
11. I diet and/or eat only specific foods related to my perceived flaw.
12. I excessively exercise to alter my perceived flaw.
13. I avoid certain places and/or activities (ie, parties, dating, swimming, restaurants, theatres, etc) because I don't want others to see my perceived flaw.
14. I avoid having my picture taken.
15. I have had cosmetic surgery to correct my perceived flaw.
16. I am dissatisfied with the outcome of these cosmetic procedures.
17. I'm planning future cosmetic procedures.

18. I am often anxious or depressed thinking about my perceived flaw.
19. I am often late for activities due to performing activities related to my perceived flaw.
20. I often believe others notice my perceived flaw.
21. I am significantly distressed about my perceived flaw.
22. I often believe others are discussing or commenting on my perceived flaw.
23. My concerns about my perceived flaw are interfering with my relationships.
24. I spend hours per day doing behaviours specifically related to my perceived flaw.

The results for this test fall into three categories:

1 to 3 ticks:

You may be more concerned about your body image than most people, but it is unlikely that these concerns significantly affect your life.

4 to 7 ticks:

There is a medium probability that you have BDD. You spend more time than most people obsessing about, and checking, your appearance.

More than 7 ticks:

There is a high probability that you have BDD. You most likely have a great amount of distress related to what you perceive to be a significant flaw with your body. It is likely you spend a considerable amount of time checking your appearance, attempting to change and/or camouflage your appearance, and avoiding situations in which you fear others might observe your perceived body flaw.

For an in-depth analysis of body dysmorphic disorder, go to ocdla.com/bodydysmorphic_disorder.html.

This questionnaire is not meant to replace a clinical evaluation.

ARE YOU REALLY A FOODIE?

By Tony Turnbull

1. How do you soft boil an egg?

- a) Add to cold water, bring to boil. Cook for 90 seconds.
- b) Add to simmering water. Cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat, cover pan, leave for 6 minutes.
- c) Add to boiling water. Cook for 4 minutes.

2. Which of these are essential to carbonara sauce?

- a) Bacon.
- b) Parmesan.
- c) Double cream.
- d) Eggs.

3. Which will burn quickest when frying?

- a) Olive oil.
- b) Rapeseed oil.
- c) Butter.
- d) Sunflower oil.

4. What is the best utensil for making mashed potato?

- a) Electric whisk.
- b) Potato masher.
- c) Potato ricer.

5. How do you stop pasta sticking?

- a) Add the pasta before the water is boiling.
- b) Add a spoon of olive oil to the water.
- c) Swirl the water as you add the pasta.

6. How long does it take to cook a 2cm thick sirloin steak medium rare?

- a) 2 minutes each side.
- b) 2½ minutes each side.
- c) 3 minutes each side.
- d) 4 minutes each side.

ANSWERS

1. All correct depending on who you believe (a: Michel Roux Sr; b: Delia; c: Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall).
2. Cream is often added, but purists say it shouldn't be, so a, b and d.
3. Butter.
4. The ricer. A whisk makes mash gluey, the masher leaves it lumpy.
5. Only add olive oil after the pasta has been drained, so the answer is c. Always use lots of salted water.
6. Provided your pan is smoking hot, the answer is a. ➔

