



Hoarding

Categories : [Mental Health Care](#)

Hoarding is the excessive collection of items, along with the inability to discard them, to the point that parts of one's home can no longer be used for their intended purpose.

Symptoms and Signs:

- Inability to throw away possessions
- Moving items from one pile to another, without discarding anything
- Severe anxiety when attempting to discard items
- Shame or embarrassment
- A large amount of clutter in the office, at home, in the car, or in other spaces that makes it difficult to use furniture or appliances or move around easily
- Limited or no social interactions
- Family or marital discord, financial difficulties and health hazards
- Excessive attachment to possessions, including discomfort letting other touch or borrow possessions
- Buying things because they are a "bargain" or to "stock up"
- Refusing to let people into the house to make repairs

People hoard because they believe that an item will be needed or have value in the future. People who hoard may report feeling safer when surrounded by the things they save.

A lack of functional living space is common among hoarders, who may also live in unhealthy or dangerous conditions. Hoarders often live with broken appliances and without heat or other necessary comforts.

Hoarding can also lead to conflicts with family members and friends who are frustrated and concerned about the state of the home and the hoarding behaviors.

Also, Hoarding officially became recognized as a mental health disorder with the publication in 2013 of the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). (The DSM is an important reference used by mental health professionals and insurance companies, among others.)

If you or a loved one has symptoms of hoarding, talk with a doctor or mental health provider as soon as possible. Getting treatment at the first signs of a problem may help prevent hoarding from becoming severe.

For more information go to:

- The Institute of Living: <https://instituteofliving.org/programs-services/anxiety-disorders-center/departments-services/compulsive-hoarding>
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America: <http://www.adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-ocd/hoarding-basics>
- Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/hoarding-disorder/home/ovc-20317407>

To Find Providers in Connecticut's Community Resources Database:

Search by service name: [Clutterer/Hoarder Support Groups](#)



SOURCES: Anxiety and Depression Association of America, Mayo Clinic; Institute of Living; Clutters Anonymous
PREPARED BY: 211/mm
CONTENT LAST REVIEWED: April2019