

SOMATIC SYMPTOM DISORDER PATHOCHART

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

Somatic Symptom Disorder (SSD), previously known as somatoform disorder, is a mental illness that causes unexplained physical symptoms such as pain that are distressing or disrupt the client's normal functioning. When no physical cause for their symptoms can be found, clients often become upset and experience increasing or changing symptoms. While there may be no explanation for the symptoms, the distress that the client feels is very real.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

- Symptoms vary by client, but may include:
 - Paralysis
 - Pain
 - Vision problems
 - Amnesia
- Unremarkable imaging (X-ray, CT, MRI, ultrasound)
- Lab tests are WNL

DIAGNOSTICS

- Excessive thoughts, feelings or behaviors:
 - Obsessing over the symptoms
 - Anxiety about the symptoms
 - Excessive time and energy spent on this health concern
- Symptoms are distressing or disrupt the client's daily life
- At least one symptom is constantly present for more than six months

NURSING PRIORITIES

- Promote adequate coping skills
- Maintain safety and prevent injury
- Promote comfort

THERAPEUTIC MANAGEMENT

- Rule out other sources of symptoms
- Teach relaxation techniques
- Teach coping skills
- Don't encourage obsession over symptoms
- Praise client for relaxation techniques
- Encourage use of a symptom journal

MEDICATION THERAPY

- Treat symptoms as appropriate
- Analgesics
- Anxiolytics
- Antidepressants