

Priority Topic: **PERSONALITY DISORDER**

Key Features:

1. When assessing a patient with **personality traits** or **behaviours** that **impair interactions and/or function** :
 - a) Distinguish between **isolated or intermittent manifestations** and **established, habitual patterns of behaviour** .
 - b) Rule out **pharmacologic** or **underlying** medical causes (e.g. substance use, brain tumour).
 - c) **Do not label the patient with a personality disorder prematurely or without clear justification** (i.e. personality traits are not a disorder).

What you should study:

- ✓ **Personality Disorders AAFP 2011**
- ✓ **CAMH Mental Health and Addiction 101 Series Course**

2. For any patient with a personality disorder or personality traits that **impair interpersonal interaction**:
- a) **Adapt** your communication style to **optimize the development** of a **therapeutic relationship to provide effective care** .
 - b) Determine the **impact** of the patient's personality disorder **on their ability to access health care** .

What you should study:

- ✓ **Personality Disorders AAFP 2011**

3. When providing care for a patient with a personality disorder, **reflect on, acknowledge, and manage** your **own emotional responses** in order to provide **empathetic and patient-centered care** .

What you should study:

- ✓ **Difficult Encounters AAFP 2013**

4. When caring for a patient with a **personality disorder** or with **difficult behaviours or requests** :
- a) **Address** the behaviour in a **direct but non-threatening manner** .
 - b) **Co-create realistic goals and expectations** with the patient.
 - c) **Establish and maintain clear boundaries and limits** (e.g. appointment length, drug prescribing, accessibility) and communicate these to your team.

d) Continue the therapeutic relationship with the patient unless there is risk to you or others.

What you should study:

- ✓ Better Boundaries 2011 – A nursing resource but very relevant
- ✓ Treating patients with BPD AAFP 2013

5. In a patient already diagnosed with personality disorder, look for medical and other psychiatric diagnoses when the patient presents for assessment of new or changed symptoms. (Patients with personality disorders develop medical and psychiatric conditions, too.)

6. When seeing a patient whom others have previously identified as having a personality disorder, evaluate the patient yourself because the diagnosis may be wrong, and the label has significant repercussions.

What you should study:

- ✓ General Personality Disorder DSM 5
- ✓ Cluster A Diagnostic Criteria DSM 5
- ✓ Cluster B Diagnostic Criteria DSM 5
- ✓ Cluster C Diagnostic Criteria DSM 5
- ✓ Other Personality Disorders DSM 5

Just for fun... and for your memory:

- ✓ Personality disorders mnemonics

