

# **HEMATOPHOBIA – CRYSTALLIZATION OF FEAR TRIGGERED BY A STIMULUS : BLOOD.**

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The term “phobia” comes from the Greek word “phobia” – meaning fear, and indicates an anxiety disorder lacking in a precise objective or cause, provoking intense reactions- both psychological and physical. The person experiencing a phobia is self conscious of the irrational aspect of the fear, and anxiety felt, but can not control it, the consciousness being devoid of any rational cognition.

Hematophobia is an abnormal condition characterized by a morbid fear of blood. According to the WHO, it ranks third among the most common phobias after phobia of birds and vacuum.

The possible causes that can lead to the development of hematophobia are: the classical conditioning (associating an unpleasant stimulus to the situation),

transmission through phobic and anxious parental models creating emotional maladjustment reactions- “Take care not to stink yourself, there will be blood” (hematophobia tends to run in the familie).

Symptoms are as follows: slow heart rate and low blood pressure, which can lead to unconsciousness, sweating, persistent and intense fear irrational nature triggered by the presence or anticipation of confrontation with specific stimulus, fear generating situation is avoided by topic.

There is no laboratory test to diagnose this disorder. The psychologist will ask the client to describe the symptoms they experience, in which situations and how often they occur. The main objective of the treatment program is to train the client to be able to confront phobic stimulus, to see blood, to be able to donate blood or endure any other medical interventions involving venipuncture.

Psychotherapy can be achieved through behavioral therapy or cognitive therapy, which may be accompanied by anxiolytic medication. In behavioral therapy, the subject is taught to contract their muscle when confronted with phobic stimulus. This muscle tension will lead to an increase in blood pressure and cardiac syncope is prevented.

Since this is a specific phobia, therapy lasts not more than ten sessions, lasting about sixty minutes per session.