

An organic brain syndrome (OBS), also known as an organic brain disease/disorder (OBD), an organic mental syndrome (OMS), or an organic mental disorder (OMD), is a syndrome or disorder of mental function whose cause is alleged to be known as organic (physiologic) rather than purely of the mind. These names are older and nearly obsolete general terms from psychiatry, referring to many physical disorders that cause impaired mental function.

They are meant to exclude psychiatric disorders (mental disorders). Originally, the term was created to distinguish physical (termed “organic”) causes of mental impairment from psychiatric (termed “functional”) disorders, but during the era when this distinction was drawn, not enough was known about brain science (including neuroscience, cognitive science, neuropsychology, and mind-brain correlation) for this cause-based classification to be more than educated guesswork labeled with misplaced certainty, which is why it has been deemphasized in current medicine.

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