Influence of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder symptoms on quality of life and functionality in adults with eating disorders.

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION:
Eating disorders (ED) have been linked to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) because they present some symptoms in common. The aim of this study was to explore the influence on ED of symptoms suggestive of adult ADHD and how these symptoms affect the clinical presentation of adult patients. A further aim was to assess the impact of ADHD symptoms on quality of life and feelings of disability.

METHOD:
Participants comprised 89 patients diagnosed with ED according to DSM-5 criteria. The ASRS v.1.1 was used to divide them into two groups depending on whether they presented symptoms suggestive of adult ADHD or not, using a cut-off point of 4. Subsequently, we administered the EAT-40, BITE, BIS-11, SDI and Q-LES-Q scales.

RESULTS:
Patients diagnosed with ED who also had symptoms suggestive of ADHD presented a higher number and severity of eating disorder symptoms, greater motor and cognitive impulsivity, increased dysfunction and a poorer quality of life.

CONCLUSIONS:
The results indicate that on average, patients with eating disorders and ADHD symptoms presented more and worse eating disorder symptoms, greater impulsivity, increased dysfunction and a poorer quality of life. It is therefore important to assess the presence of ADHD symptoms in patients with ED due to the implications for prognosis and progression.