

Are treatment results for eating disorders affected by ADHD symptoms? A one-year follow-up of adult females.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE:

To explore the influence of self-reported Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) symptoms on recovery rate at 1-year follow-up in an unselected group of patients in a specialized eating disorder (ED) clinic.

METHODS:

Four hundred forty-three adult females with an ED were assessed with the ADHD Self-Report Scale for Adults (ASRS-screener), and for demographic variables and ED symptoms. Recovery was registered at 1-year follow-up.

RESULTS:

A high degree of ADHD symptoms at baseline was predictive for nonrecovery of ED at 1-year follow-up in patients with loss of control over eating, bingeing, or purging. The presence of inattentive ADHD symptoms was stronger associated with nonrecovery than hyperactive/impulsive symptoms.

CONCLUSIONS:

A high degree of ADHD symptoms may have a negative impact on recovery in ED. Screening/diagnostic evaluation of ADHD in all loss of control over eating/bingeing/purging ED patients and studies of the effect of implementing ADHD-treatment strategies in this patient group are recommended.