



Mini Review

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Relationship of Anorexia Nervosa with Depression



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According to DSM 5, the diagnostic criteria of anorexia nervosa involve:

- a) Restriction of energy intake relative to requirements, leading to significantly low body weight in the context of age, sex, developmental trajectory, and physical health. Significantly low weight is defined as a weight that is less than minimally normal or, for children and adolescents, less than that minimally expected.
- b) Intense fear of gaining weight or of becoming fat or persistent behavior that interferes with weight gain, even though at a significantly low weight.
- c) Disturbance in the way in which one's body weight or shape is experienced, undue influence of body weight or shape on self-evaluation, or persistent lack of recognition of the seriousness of the current low body weight. Anorexia nervosa occurs more commonly in females than males with clinical populations reflecting a 10:1 female- to- male ratio.

It has been recognized that patients with anorexia nervosa have wide range of other psychiatric disorders. Review of literature has revealed that anorexia nervosa and depression have a strong association with each other. It has been found that 91% of anorexia nervosa patients suffer from depression [1,2]. On the basis of population studies, about 50% of women who have anorexia nervosa have been reported with lifetime major depression [3].

Cantwell [4] conducted a longitudinal study on 26 anorexia patients who were hospitalized at the time. Upon investigation it was found that the patients revealed depressive symptoms. It was also found that family history also contributed the anorexia nervosa patients. The study thus reveals that there is a strong relationship between anorexia nervosa and depression; along with it history of the disorder in the family also contributes to the symptoms.

A study was conducted by Pollice [5] on women to assess the relationship between anorexia nervosa and depression amongst

females. The sample consisted of 22 underweight women, 22 women with short term weight restored and 26 women with long term weight restored. The results of the study showed that as the weight restored along with it the depression also improved.

Holtkamp [6] studied depression in patients who were long term recovered with anorexia nervosa. The sample consisted of 39 adolescents (32 female, 7 males). It was found that there was a strong relationship between depression and anorexia nervosa as the depressive symptoms may be personality traits in recovered anorexia nervosa adolescents.

Summary

It has also been shown that as the patients gained weight; the level of depression was also reduced along with it but was not eliminated altogether [7,8]. The knowledge of this can help the therapists, psychiatrists to focus on the treatment of depression or other organic disorder even after the patient has gained normal weight. Neglect of the same can worsen the disorder which can delay the recovery time.

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