



POSTER PRESENTATION

Anorexia Nervosa in men: nuclear similarities and essential differences

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Abstract

Introduction: For many decades the topic of eating disorders (ED) in males was largely neglected and there are actually very limited epidemiological data about this subject. Historical studies have examined Anorexia Nervosa (AN) from an almost entirely female focus, creating stigmatizing suppositions which have all failed to fully encapsulate the condition. The construction of AN as a woman's illness has also been rooted in clinical practice, with the International Classification Diseases (ICD) 10 and DSM IV (up to 2013) including amenorrhea as a diagnostic criterion of AN. This view has fundamentally shaped the identity and status of male sufferers who bear the added burden of a feminised diagnosis.

Objectives: To study the male cases of AN as a way to enhance the knowledge on aetiology and pathophysiology of this complex and multifactorial disease.

Methods: First, we will describe a clinical case of a young man with AN who was admitted to our Sara. Afterwards, we will

briefly review the most current literature addressing the shared disease components in both genders, but also the crucial differences in male patients.

Results and Discussion: Men with AN are frequently underdiagnosed, less likely to receive treatment and treated for fewer days. Their first presentation is usually late in their illness trajectory, because they experience problems in recognizing that they may have AN as a result of the continuing cultural construction of this disease as uniquely female diagnosis. There is a lack of awareness also from health professionals, which contributes massively to the delayed diagnosis this patients have to face. At that time, the disease has already become well established and therefore, even more difficult to treat.

Conclusion: It's imperative to decouple the experience of eating disorders from feminised cultural imagery, in order to break down the barriers men face between AN and the correct diagnosis and adequate treatment of this disease.

Supplementary material: Complete presentation available at <http://ijcnmh.arc-publishing.org>

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