EPP0605

Emotional regulation and attachment in adolescents with anorexia nervosa

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Introduction: The aim of the present study was to investigate emotional regulation and attachment in adolescents with anorexia nervosa (AN).
Objectives: Anorexia Nervosa (AN) is an eating disorder (ED) characterized by self-starvation driving by weight, shape, and eating concerns and extreme dread of food, eating, and normal body weight. Dysfunctional emotional processing and regulation play an important role in the development and maintenance of eating disorders (EDs). Difficulties with emotional awareness and regulation in EDs are hypothesized to have their origins in childhood attachment.
Methods: The study population (N=20) consists of two research groups of patients with AN (group A) and general population controls (group B), matched for gender and age. The age of patients was 12-18 years. All adolescents were female. This study examined the attachment states of mind, assessed by the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), and emotion regulation difficulties, measured by the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS).
Results: Group A reported significantly higher attachment insecurity (82% vs 50%) than group B. Group A show higher DERS total (nonacceptance, goals, and impulsivity scores) than group B.
Conclusions: Study results show a crucial role of attachment insecurity and emotional dysregulation in the development and maintenance of AN. Developing interventions to improve emotional management skills in the treatment of patients with AN can be an important component in improving treatment outcomes.

Keywords: anorexia nervosa; Emotional Regulation; attachment; DERS

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The effect of eight yoga sessions on interoceptive accuracy, confidence and awareness in a sample of patients with eating disorder: A preliminary study

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Introduction: Previous research from our group showed that, after a single yoga class, Interoceptive Accuracy (IAc), tested through the Heartbeat Counting Task, improved in a group of Healthy Controls (HC), but not in a group of patients with Anorexia Nervosa (AN).
Objectives: To evaluate three levels of interoception (accuracy, confidence (IC) and awareness (IAw)) before and after eight sessions of Yoga in a sample of patients with Eating Disorders (ED: AN, Bulimia Nervosa (BN) and Binge Eating Disorder (BED)).
Methods: 15 patients with ED were included. Before the first yoga session (T0) and 72 hours after the last session (T1), participants underwent: (i) the Heartbeat Counting Task for the evaluation of IAc, IC and IAw; (ii) a psychometric assessment evaluating depression, anxiety, body awareness, alexithymia, self-objectification and eating disorders symptomatology.
Results: At T1, ED patients' IAc appeared higher than at T0, but not IC and IAw. A trend towards significance ($p = 0.055$) emerged for the interaction effect between IAc and diagnosis, with BED patients having a higher increase of IAc at T1 than AN and BN patients. Significant correlations between IAc and Alexithymia, Anxiety and Depression emerged at T0, but were not maintained at T1.
Conclusions: After a program of eight Yoga sessions, IAc in ED patients (but not IC and IAw) increases, especially in BED patients. Moreover, the improvement of IAc following the yoga course seems to be unrelated to the course of depressive, anxious and alexithymic symptoms of ED patients.

Keywords: eating disorders; yoga; Interoception; Heartbeat Counting Task

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What drives the excess of physical exercise observed in patients with anorexia nervosa?

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Introduction: Anorexia Nervosa (AN) is a severe mental illness characterized by weight reducing strategies such as food restriction, purging behaviours and excessive physical exercise. The persistence of physical exercise despite underweight and its maintaining factors are poorly understood.
Objectives: The aim of this study is to explore the attitudes towards physical exercise and its effects on mood, body image perception and cognitive functioning in patients with AN, and to assess if these effects are associated with trait, or state.
Methods: Eighty-eight patients with AN, 30 unaffected relatives and 89 healthy controls were compared about their attitudes towards three aspects of physical exercise, namely the Exercise Dependence Scale (EDS), the Godin Leisure Time Exercise Questionnaire (GLTEQ) and a standardized effort test. Evaluations of positive and negative affects, cognitive rigidity and body image distortion were repeated at baseline and after the effort test to assess for correlations between the exercise measures and exercise-induced modifications in the three groups.