

Treating bulimia nervosa

ACCORDING to the World Encyclopedia (2005), bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder that is characterised by excessive eating followed by purging by methods of vomiting, diuretics, or laxatives.

Research is being conducted to find the cause of this.

Common characteristics of people with bulimia include low self-esteem, problems with relationships (both family and friends), inability to cope with pressure, and the need to fit in.

It is also characterised by weight problems including poor body image.

Bulimia is usually the result of a psychological disorder and an obsession with body image.

The disorder usually presents itself in late adolescence and early adulthood (Schoenstadt, 2007).

But recent studies have shown that bulimia is becoming more common among pre-teen girls.

About 1% to 3% of adolescents in the United States have bulimia.

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BY AJIT LUDHER



One study showed that of the girls studied, 70% reported that the age in which they first became concerned with their weight was between the ages of nine and 11 (Schoenstadt, 2007).

A study in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* compared the risk factors of having a binge-eating disorder against those without any health disorders.

The study involved a total of 360 women, out of which, 52 suffered from a binge-eating disorder, 102 had bulimia nervosa, 102 had a psychiatric disorder, and 104 without any disorder.

Those with a binge-eating disorder were more likely to have weight vulnerabilities, parental depression, and frequently received criticism for their weight from others.

Those with bulimia were found to have a negative body and self image, perfectionistic tendencies,

and vulnerability to obesity (Fairburn, Doll, Welch, Hay, Davies, & O'Connor, 1998).

Several forms of treatment have shown success in treating people with bulimia, including hypnotherapy.

There are many psychological factors involved with this eating disorder including negative body image, perfectionism, and outside factors such as family.

The study showed that using hypnosis sessions to treat people with bulimia had proved to be effective.

The hypnosis techniques involved relaxation, imagery, and positive suggestions to target the subconscious mind of the patient.

Hypnosis was able to improve and treat the psychological issues contributing to bulimia nervosa.

These studies show the advances in treating bulimia, particularly through using alternative methods such as hypnotherapy.

Hypnotherapy is a safe and natural method with many lasting benefits. More research is being conducted to evaluate the positive benefits that can be realised by using hypnosis to treat bulimia nervosa as well as other medical challenges.



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