

Mindfulness based interventions for eating disorders inpatients

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There is some evidence that mindfulness-based treatment programs can be usefully adopted in clinical inpatient settings and for challenging problems, especially for eating disorders inpatients, suicide adolescents and borderline patients. Keeping in mind that mindfulness approaches (MBCT, MBSR, ACT) easily lend themselves to applications in a group therapy setting and on account of an excellent cost-efficient ratio resulting from this sort of application, these kinds of interventions are particularly suitable in inpatient settings especially with eating disorders. In this report an example of the application of a mindfulness approach for hospitalized patients with eating disorders will be illustrated. We will present the mindfulness based therapy program inpatient treatment provided by the Department of Psychiatry of the CDAA (Centro Regionale per i Disturbi dell' Alimentazione in Adolescenza) located in Pietra Ligure Savona Asl 2 Savonese Liguria, where an adapted version of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) forms an important part of an integrated and multidisciplinary team program for Eating Disorders. Setting, typical format of a group session, theoretical framework and some peculiar difficulties will be discussed. Mindfulness based treatment programs can be effectively adopted in clinical inpatient settings for eating disorders and they can optimize the resources of the staff. Furthermore it seems to be able to enhance treatment team processes. Mindfulness-based approaches offer a cost-efficient way to generically teach useful skills for disengaging patients from the dysfunctional cognitive processing modes that characterize severe eating disorders.

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The role of relaxin-3 system in stress-induced binge eating

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Binge eating is a core symptom in bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder. Bingeing episodes are frequently triggered by stress or negative mood and involve intake of highly palatable food. We developed a model of binge eating based on individual sensitivity of female rats to increase sucrose consumption in response to stress. The rats were subjected to unpredictable intermittent 1-h access to 10% sucrose. After stabilization of sucrose intake, the rats were assessed for consistency of higher (for binge-like eating prone, BEP) or lower (for binge-like eating resistant, BER) sucrose intake in response to unpredictable episodes of stress. The BEP rats consumed a larger (20% > BER) amount of sucrose in a discrete (1-h) period of time compared to the BER phenotype in non-stressful conditions and significantly increased sucrose intake (50% > BER) under stress. Analyses of the sucrose licking microstructure revealed that BEP rats had a high motivational drive to consume sucrose in non-stressful condition and an increased hedonic value of sucrose when they were exposed to stressful conditions. BEP rats consumed sucrose much more rapidly under stressful conditions compared to BER rats. In the brain, BEP rats demonstrated strong activation of expression of orexigenic neuropeptide relaxin-3 and its specific receptor RXFP3. Central administration of RXFP3 antagonist prevented stress-induced bingeing on sucrose in BEP rats. These results highlight the potential role of relaxin-3/RXFP3 system as a novel pharmacological target for the treatment of stress-induced binge eating.

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