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Using latent growth curve modeling in clinical treatment research: Comparing guided self-change and cognitive behavioral therapy treatments for bulimia nervosa

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**Background and aims:** The purpose of this study was to demonstrate the usefulness of multi-group piece-wise latent growth curve models (LGCM) in clinical research, particularly for assessing and comparing treatment effects. As an empirical example, this analytic technique was used to compare the effectiveness of Guided Self-Change (GSC) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) treatments for bulimia nervosa.

**Methods:** Sixty-two female patients (M age = 28.1, SD = 8.00) with bulimia nervosa were randomly assigned to a) a GSC treatment involving a self-care manual plus 8 bi-weekly sessions of CBT or b) 16 weekly sessions of CBT.

**Results:** Both groups showed significant improvements in treatment outcomes across the treatment period, although the CBT group showed greater improvements. However, the GSC group evidenced more continued improvement post-treatment. CBT showed greater variability in effectiveness during the treatment period, while GSC showed greater variability during follow-up. For GSC patients, baseline levels on some treatment outcomes were related to follow-up improvement levels.

**Conclusions:** LGCM provided a rich analysis of these data, and addressed important questions regarding differences in the effectiveness of the two treatment programs. For example, CBT tended to show greater improvements during treatment, while GSC evidenced more continued improvements during follow-up.

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Psychopathological characterization of morbid obese patients proposed for bariatric surgery

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**Introduction:** Obesity is considered an important Public Health problem, due to his continuous growing and terrible medical and psychological consequences. In morbid obesity this problems are even more complicated and surgery is sometimes the only solution. Bariatric surgery is a term derived from the Greek words: “weight” and “treatment.” Weight reduction may be life saving for patients with extreme obesity, for whom no other satisfactory long term therapy currently exists. The patients proposed for this procedure are always submitted to psychiatry avaluation.

**Objectives:** Psychopathological characterization of morbid obese patients proposed for bariatric surgery.

**Population and Methods:** We studied 60 morbid obese outpatients of the Psychiatry Department of our Hospital, proposed for bariatric surgery. Their age ranged between 18 and 60 years. Informed Consent was obtained from all participants. We evaluated patients trough the following sequence: clinical interview in order to obtain clinical and social variables; EDI, SCL 90-R, MOS SF-36, and impulsiveness and body image scales.

**Results:** The study is now under statistically evaluation. The authors enhance the crucial role of Psychiatry in the multidisciplinary approach of morbid obese patients.

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3111t/c polymorphism of the clock gene confers a predisposition to a lifetime lower body weight in anorexia and bulimia nervosa

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In mammals, the suprachiasmatic nuclei of the hypothalamus contain the master circadian clock that coordinates the daily temporal organization of endogenous rhythms. The core oscillation is thought to be driven by several genes called “clock genes” for their crucial role in the clockwork. Eating disorders (EDs), such as anorexia nervosa (AN) and bulimia nervosa (BN), are characterized by a disruption of circadian feeding patterns, as well as by alterations in the circadian rhythms of endogenous hormones. Therefore, a possible role of the clock gene in the biological vulnerability to EDs may be suggested.

To explore this hypothesis we designed a case-control study exploring the 3111T/C polymorphism of the CLOCK gene in patients with EDs. One hundred fifty one female Caucasian patients were enrolled into the study. Sixty of them met the DSM-IV diagnosis of AN and 91 met the DSM-IV diagnosis of BN purging. A group of 90 normal weight Caucasian healthy women were also recruited. We could not detect any significant association between the 3111T/C polymorphism of the CLOCK gene and AN or BN. Moreover, we found that the 3111T/C polymorphism of the CLOCK gene was significantly associated with minimum past BW in both AN and BN individuals, but not in healthy controls.

In conclusion, our present findings, although preliminary, suggest that the CLOCK 3111T/C SNP does not represent a major vulnerability factor for AN and BN, but seems to predispose ED patients to a more severe BW loss in the course of their illness.

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Eating disorders in males, a general population study in Norwegian males

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Eating disorders (ED) is commonly referred to among women. Very few studies have been done focusing on male ED. A traditional point of view is that eating disorders are rare among men. This may be right in regard to anorexia nervosa; however clinical experiences and recent studies show that we should not disregard eating pathology among men.

In the present study, 5000 postal questionnaires were sent out in December 2005 to men 18-65 years in Norway. The total response rate was 41%.

The main aim of the present study was to calculate the lifetime, and point prevalences of eating disorders in the general male