

Eating Disorder: Not a Food, but a Mental Disorder

Upayan Ghosh*

Department of Biotechnology, KIIT School of Biotechnology (KIIT University), Odisha, India

EDITORIAL

Although the term itself has the word eating in it in reality the mental impairment has something more than just-food. These disorders begin with an obsession with body shape, food, and body weight. An epidemiological study was done in USA estimates, in which nearly 10 and 20 million men and women respectively suffered from Eating disorders once in their lifetime. Another study done observes that this disease is more prevalent in adolescents than in adults, the observed value was 13% of adolescents experienced this disease within 20 years of age.

Perfectionism, neuroticism, and impulsivity were pointed out to be three personal characters associated with greater risk or are found to be directly proportional with the onset of eating disorder. The genetic relationship was also found to be correlated with this disease as depicted in a study where two twins who were separated during birth developed the disease despite having completely different food habits and family atmosphere. Society plays a major role in the development of this disease. We live in a society where physical beauty has a direct relationship with thinness this indeed creates mental pressure on those people who are fighting obesity. Observing from the perspective of biological science it was reported that dopamine and serotonin play a crucial role in the development of this disease.

Eating disorder is one such disease which is subdivided into diseases like Pica, Anorexia, Binge eating disorder, Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder, and Rumination disorder. Pica is a disease associated with the urge for eating things that are not considered food example chalk, cloth, paper, and soap. Anorexia is associated with the patient always worried about their weight and restricts themselves from eating even

though are typically underweight. Binge eating disorder is one such disorder when the patient starts eating until he is full and is about to vomit. The patient feels a blow over their self-esteem once the episode is over. Interestingly binge patients never become overweight though they panic about being. Avoidant/Restricted food intake disorder is associated with intolerance of food because of the texture, flavor, and smell of the particular food. This disease starts at the age of infancy and in some cases continues till adulthood. Rumination Disorder is one of the newest Eating disorders identified, in this type of disorder the patient chews the precious food and then throws it out. The process is completely under its reflex. Therapy is one of the treatments for Rumination Disorder.

It can be concluded that food disorder is something related less to food but more to human psychology or behavior towards food. None of these behaviors are normal and do require medical attention. The fact that many people in developing and even in developed countries are not even aware of such conditions as abnormal cannot be denied. Awareness regarding mental health issues is the need of the hour and regulating bodies must act in the proper way to pave the way for a brighter and erase the ignorance from the mass.

* **Correspondence to:** Upayan Ghosh, Department of Biotechnology, KIIT School of Biotechnology (KIIT University), Odisha, India, Tel: +919348669829; E-mail: bobupayan@gmail.com.

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