

Anorexia and Bulimia Nervosa: Treatments and their Effectiveness

Treatments for Eating Disorders

Weight Restoration

- For severe anorexics - they have to be hospitalised
- Calories pumped into the patient, under supervision
- Introduction to eating meals

Changing Cognitions (Cognitive Therapy)

- Examining and replacing problematic thoughts. Replacing faulty ideas.
- Maintaining new thoughts; written plans

Evaluation (Cognitive Therapy)

- Successful for long-term
- Better than drug therapy
- Involves direct challenge of patient's thought processes.
- Focuses on the individual and ignores the environment

Behavioural Treatment

- Learning new way of responding to food
- Rewards given when meal has been eaten
- If patient does not comply, privileges are taken away

Evaluation (Behavioural Treatment)

- Understood by staff, family. The therapy is also straightforward to carry out
- Degrading for patients to have privileges taken away
- difficult to maintain outside of the hospital ward.

Effectiveness of Treatments

- Recovery in six/seven years
- Weight restoration: Highly effective treatment for anorexia nervosa. It prevents physical symptoms of starvation
- **Minuchin** recommended that the family should also go into therapy
- Antidepressants have some success with bulimia, a few recover and also works well with cognitive and behavioural therapy.