A clinician’s quick guide of evidence-based approaches
Number 1: Eating disorders
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doi:10.1111/cp.12004

In the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, it is likely that four eating disorders will be recognised: anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder, and eating disorder not otherwise specified (EDNOS).

Existing Treatment Guidelines

Useful Overviews of Treatment for Clinicians

Evidence Based Treatment Manuals

Evidence-Based Self-Help Books

**Evidence-Based Books for Carers**


**Assessment**

The gold standard assessment tool is the Eating Disorder Examination—it can be used as an interview format or as a self-report measure and can be downloaded from http://www.psychiatry.ox.ac.uk/research/researchunits/credo/assessment-measures

**Take Home Messages about Treatment Approaches**

1. Anorexia nervosa
   a. For children and adolescents, the preferred approach is one involving family-based treatment, where adolescent-focused individual therapy is considered a good alternative.
   b. For adults, doing something is better than doing nothing, but we do not know which the best treatments are. Specialist care that involves nutritional and weight restoration in addition to psychotherapy is recommended.

2. Bulimia nervosa
   a. Guided self-help approaches can be a good first-line treatment.
   b. In terms of psychotherapy, cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) for adolescents and adults results in the most rapid and best outcome that is sustained over long-term follow up—interpersonal psychotherapy provides commensurate outcome but takes longer to achieve.
   c. Antidepressant medication is indicated to be as effective as CBT but is unlikely to produce effects once the person ceases taking the medication so relapse rates are high.

3. Binge eating disorder
   a. Relevant aspects of cognitive behaviour therapy used with bulimia nervosa are appropriate but can be less intensive.
   b. Therapy can be combined with weight management strategies.

4. EDNOS
   a. Use the treatments indicated earlier for the eating disorder most resembled.

**New and Emerging Developments**

There is a considerable body of research currently being conducted into identifying the best treatments for adult anorexia nervosa—including psychodynamic, specialist supportive clinical management, cognitive behaviour therapy, and Maudsley anorexia nervosa treatment for adults. Keep an eye on the emerging literature.