

13 - The impact of laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding on body image disturbance, self-esteem and psychological well-being: An Italian follow-up study

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Objective: The effectiveness of post-surgical weight loss in improving body image disturbance, self-esteem and psychological well-being in morbidly obese patients, remains to date unclear. The current preliminary study intends to investigate pre and post-operative changes in psychological well-being, self-esteem and body image.

Methods: 125 patients (65% Female; M age = 32.68; MBMI = 43.9) scheduled for laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding (LAGB) from three Italian hospitals completed the Body Uneasiness Test (BUT), the Psychological General Well-Being Index Short Version and the Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale before and 12 months after surgery.

Results: Irrespective of BMI reduction, LAGB has a positive impact on psychological well-being and self-esteem. Instead the improvement in the distress related to body image depends on the pre-operative degree of severity (Global Severity Index of BUT): all patients with a body image disorder in the pre-operative stage (35%, measured using the cut-off value of BUT) continue to show this even 13 months after the operation.

Conclusion: The results confirm that weight reduction leads to an improvement in psychological well-being and self-esteem. Nevertheless, the improvement in the distress related to body image was found only in patients without BID. This study outlines the high prevalence of BID in LAGB setting and suggests therefore the importance of a preoperative clinical evaluation.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2013.03.027>

14 - The role of body shame and body image avoidant behaviours in deliberate self-harm

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Objective: Dysfunctional view of or negative attitude toward the body may facilitate deliberate self-harm (DSH) because the body is experienced as a hated object. Objectification theory posits that the growing objectification of the body in Western media (i.e. the experience of being viewed and/or treated by others as merely a body, with beauty highly valued) leads individuals to self-objectify or take on an observer's perspective on their own body; they therefore learn to treat themselves as objects to be looked at and evaluated on the basis of physical appearance. Self-objectification (SO) has been found to be closely associated to body shame (BS) and body image avoidant behaviour (BIAB). The aim in the current perspective study was to investigate the mediating role of BS and BIAB between SO and DSH among adolescent boys and girls at ages 13 and 15.

Methods: Data from 322 Italian adolescents (46% boys), who completed self-report measures at baseline after one and two years were analysed via a latent variable longitudinal structural equation modelling approach. Previous scores were controlled for.

Results: Both the measurement and the structural model were good fits for the data. The relationship between SO and DSH was fully mediated by BS and BIAB. A multiple-group comparison analysis did not reveal differences across gender groups.

Conclusion: Data suggest that a) DSH behaviour may not be as gender-based as originally believed, and b) prevention and treatment programs may want to address negative body feelings and related behaviours as one way to potentially reduce DSH.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2013.03.028>

15 - Psychiatric disorders encountered during bone marrow transplantation

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Objective: Bone marrow transplantation (BMT) is a complex medical procedure used in the treatment of a variety of haematological disorders. Successful achievement of BMT requires patients to tolerate isolation for several weeks and follow several regulations and instructions to survive treatment. This study aimed at examining the prevalence of AXIS I disorders encountered during BMT.

Methods: Patients with history of previous psychiatric illness, organic cases associated with physical illness or drugs side effects, and those with age less than 18 years were excluded from the study. The sample was composed of 136 patients undergoing for BMT (66% Male; M age = 36.28) at the BMT unit of two Italian hospitals. All patients were assessed with the validated Italian versions of Structured Clinical Interview for the DSM-IV criteria (SCID-I).

Results: 54 of the 136 patients (39.7%) warranted a DSM-IV psychiatric diagnosis with SCID-I evaluation. Gender, age, education, haematological/oncological diagnosis, type of transplantation (autologous vs. allogeneic), and duration of illness were not significantly different between patients with or without AXIS I psychiatric diagnoses. The most frequent diagnoses were within the affective spectrum disorders, followed by anxiety spectrum disorders. The remaining diagnoses were within the somatoform spectrum disorders. The most prevalent disorders were major depression (28%), panic disorder without agoraphobia (9%) and generalised anxiety disorder (8%).

Conclusion: The results highlight the importance of psychiatric assessment and intervention during the isolation period of BMT. Future studies need to evaluate the utility of standardised self-reports (ie. Hospital Anxiety Depression Scales) for screening purposes.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2013.03.029>

16 - Biological embedding of child stress through inflammation

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Objective: Stressful childhood experiences, such as maltreatment, have been linked to negative psychiatric and medical outcomes. In a series of human studies, I have tested whether inflammation could contribute explaining these clinical effects.