

editorial

Obese or anorexic? Let us choose

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What we call obesity is today defined by several definitions, rules and markers. What we call anorexia is not so well defined in everyday practice and needs series of examinations by experts because the anorexic style is in fashion and scarcely remains out of pathological frames in a large percentage. Both conditions are abnormal, but which of them is more annoying and which of them is more acceptable by the society?

Obesity is common, easily recognizable and dangerous, while anorexic people are fewer and many times hide their bodies within their big clothes. What we have not discovered so far is how close are the brain reactions (to environmental stimuli) that lead us to excess food consumption or inadequate food consumption. It is hopeful that abnormalities of eating became very popular lately and eating disorders have started to be categorized under one common name, however the term bulimia and not the term hyperphagia is preferred to stand opposite the term anorexia. Practically, the pair bulimia-anorexia are seen as standing many Km away in distance from obesity. But some obese after a successful diet are in danger of becoming anorexic. Bulimia with hyperphagia may co-exist, but bulimia is not so often as hyperphagia. Bulimia is not easy to be diagnosed and treated, so a retrograde method for diagnosing and treating might be the complete study of hyperphagia. You can find millions of hyperphagic persons, ready to offer themselves for study and therapy. At the same time bulimic persons are not so many and definitely not so easy persons to work with. On the contrary, obese people are "happy people". They are many times more sensible and ready to help others. They are persons who apparently deserve the help of obesity experts and are keen on listening about anti-obesity methods. To start a retrograde route of studying we should find clearly what happens with brain in obesity. If this problem is solved, then rarer abnormalities as anorexia and bulimia would eventually be treated, with similar methods.

Plasticity of brain: Essential theory to start with

Learning and memory mechanisms have been under constant study and revision for years. As soon as molecular medicine findings found their answers in neuropsychologic theories and neuropsychologic tests' results, the plasticity of brain theory became more popular than ever. Now not only

Alzheimer's sufferers, but also normal adults are challenged to trigger their brain and have a better life by enhancing learning and memory skills. According to neurophysiologists and in accordance with the plasticity of brain, if obese were taught to eat in a normal way and to use tricks for avoiding dangerous foods, this might be the solution to their problem. Because, as we have seen with the results of obesity surgery, a large number of persons who are operated for obesity come back to their doctor after 2-3 years obese enough to undergo a second operation as their brain is continuing to be thinking abnormally. Education, in the same way, could become the critical step for bulimia and anorexia, while the pharmaceutical help should rather be left aside, except from life-threatening cases.

Fashion addicts, racism and eating disorders: society accepts the anorexic

While fashion designers have been presenting the anorexic look as a well-accepted image of female body, the deaths caused by anorexia have changed the beliefs of women now. However, racism is mostly oriented to obese women, less to obese men, and almost never touches the anorexic. This shows that our society is not yet ready to accept that obesity is less annoying than anorexia. On the contrary, obese persons have now been labelled as patients, while anorexic women may hope to find a work as fashion models, if they are lucky and persistent!

When an eating disorder is accepted by the society or is necessary for working in a job, it may become a pattern of life for normal people who struggle to become anorexic! The unhealthy way of eating and life-style in general has been well described recently by a former New Zealand model, Jenna Sauers, in a blog column secretly kept, which led eventually to giving up her career for ever when everything was learnt about her identity.

Anti-Obesity Medicine is not a beauty game

While medical studies present new interesting data for anti-obesity treatments, on the other hand pharmaceutical industry struggles to make obesity a drug-dependent problem. "Eat fried meat and fried potatoes, receive pills and become slim" is a marketing promo message that obese like to imagine, but it didn't help much in practice. However, obesity is not a drug