

Relationship between control and the intermediate term outcome of anorexia nervosa in Hong Kong

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Abstract

Objective: To examine the relationship between control and the intermediate term outcome of Chinese patients with anorexia nervosa.

Method: 88 patients who fulfilled the DSM-III-R criteria for typical (fat phobic, n = 63) and atypical (non-fat phobic, n = 25) anorexia nervosa were contacted 9 years after the onset of illness. They completed the Morgan-Russell Outcome Assessment Schedule, Shapiro Control Inventory, and Eating Disorder Inventory-I.

Results: 62.2%, 32.4% and 5.4% of patients had good, intermediate, and poor outcome. Outcome was positively correlated with the overall general and specific sense of control, positive sense of control, and negatively with negative sense of control. Patients with good outcome exhibited the least negative modes of control and had the least desire for control. Typical and atypical patients showed similar but not identical control profiles.

Conclusion: Healthier control was associated with better outcome of anorexia nervosa but their causal relationship was far from clear because of the cross-sectional nature of the present study. The Shapiro Control Inventory is a potentially useful instrument for studying control in eating disorders.

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