

Healthy Futures News Views

An Educational Newsletter Covering Eating Disorder Treatment and Other Mental Health Issues

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HF at forefront of helping those with BED

The American Psychiatric Association is expected to publish the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders next month.

For those in the field of treating eating disorders, one of the most significant changes from the DSM-4 is the inclusion of Binge Eating Disorder (BED) as a fully recognized designation.

Healthy Futures has been at the forefront of treatment for those who struggle with binge eating.

In 2011, the Scottsdale clinic began offering its Emotional Eaters Intensive Outpatient Program (EEIOP).

Meeting two nights per week, Healthy Futures' EEIOP offers amazing support, with group and individual therapy from trained and licensed counselors, coaching, exercise support, DBT (dialectical behavioral therapy), "mindful meal" experiences, nutrition support and more.

The goal is to help patients start a healthy and happy relationship with food, and to help them



For those who struggle with Binge Eating Disorder, the term "irresistible dessert" can truly be literal. For some, eating high-caloric foods can produce a high similar to that of cocaine.

break unhealthy relationships with food, such as yo-yo dieting.

Brain chemistry

The inclusion of BED in the upcoming DSM-5 further highlights what researchers already have shown – that "hyperpalatable" foods (highly processed, usually very high in fat, sugar and/or salt) can activate a person's brain reward circuits in ways similar to that of cocaine and heroin.

Like those who struggle with addiction to those drugs, binge eaters experience a similar cycle with calorie-dense foods. In the beginning, eating smaller amounts of these foods release dopamine in the brain, which offers a sort of high, intensely pleasurable experience.

However, as time goes on, repeated exposure to dopamine when the reward pathway is activated results in fewer dopamine receptors. Meaning those

with BED find themselves eating more and more trying to recapture that original feeling of pleasure.

Making matters more challenging, in some people, the decrease in dopamine receptors is connected to decreased activity in the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain responsible for controlling impulses, decision making and exercising judgment. Sadly, a

Please see BED on page 2

Online videos carrying dangerous ED messages

Based on a new study of social media sites, the Internet is a dangerous place, especially for those dealing with eating disorders.

Dr. Shabbir Syed-Abdul, MD, along with several colleagues, reviewed video content on video sharing sites, such as YouTube, and found an alarming number of pro-eating disorder messages.

Known as “pro-ana” (for pro-anorexia), these videos often give advice to people about how to lose weight.

Much of the advice is drastic and threatening to mental and physical health. For example, some of the videos suggest taking up smoking cigarettes as a way to avoid food.

The authors of the new study reviewed video

content of both pro-ana videos and videos aimed at educating and providing support for those struggling with eating disorders. Sadly, the pro-anorexia videos were favored three times more than the others, based on clicks of the like and dislike buttons.

The authors also discovered the most viewed informational videos most often featured celebrities who have been affected by eating disorders.

Informational videos produced by health agencies received far fewer views and clicks on the like/dislike button.

Sites such as YouTube allow users to flag videos as inappropriate, yet action is only taken by

such websites after a large number of flags have been issued. Even then, a pro-ana video



might only be listed as age restricted.

The new study bolsters a growing body of evidence suggesting pro-eat-

ing disorder videos can be dangerous and harmful.

As the authors of the new study commented, people searching for such things as “healthy diet tips” can easily stumble upon a pro-ana video and not realize the full dangers of the information being presented.

BED continued from page 1

vicious cycle can ensue, as these individuals consume greater quantities of calorie-dense food to achieve the reward and they are less able to exert control over the behavior.

Experts estimate approximately 15 million people struggle with BED in America. The inclusion of BED in the DMS-5 should help people access treatment for the disorder. It also should help educate the public about the very real struggles faced by those with binge eating disorder.

To learn more about Healthy Futures' EEIOP, call (480) 451-8500, or see HealthyFuturesAZ.com online.

BUT WE'RE SAFE!

Did you know Healthy Futures has a YouTube channel? We feature short videos, hosted by our amazing team members, in the areas of eating disorders, nutrition, relaxation, mental well being and more. You can find us at Youtube.com/HealthyFuturesAZ.