

## Children's Hospital Association Eating Disorder Questions

Anna is 15-year-old female who presents to the Emergency Department via EMS after fainting in gym class one hour ago. Anna's mother meets her at the hospital, and she is extremely worried and anxious. Anna lives at home with her father and two younger brothers. She has no significant past medical history and no known allergies. Anna reports taking a daily laxative to help with constipation.

As you are getting Anna settled into her room you begin talking with her about how she is feeling. You notice that she appears thin. You ask Anna if she is hungry and what kinds of food she likes to eat. She responds that she thinks she is lactose intolerant and last year decided not to eat any meat, sugar, or butter. Additionally, she prefers to drink water over sports drink during strenuous physical activity. Anna's mother adds, "She hasn't been eating very much lately. I've noticed her focusing on counting calories to restrict her diet and exercising excessively. I thought she was just stressed with finals at school, but I'm really worried about her."

### **Vital Signs**

Height: 173 cm

Weight: 46.8 kg

Blood pressure: 88/46 mmHg

Heart rate: 38 bpm

Respiratory rate: 18

Temperature: 37.4°C

O<sub>2</sub> sat: 100%

BMI: 15.64 kg/m<sup>2</sup>

### **Physical Assessment**

Respiratory: breath sounds clear to auscultation

Cardiovascular: Sinus bradycardia, otherwise normal heart tones

Gastrointestinal: Sparse and palpable stool in the lower left quadrant

Neurological: Cranial nerves intact, gait is mildly unsteady

Other: Skin is dry, hands appear bluish in color, negative Russell's sign

### **Lab work**

All within normal limits except low glucose (48) and alkaline phosphorus (52)

As the nurse taking care of Anna, you are worried about her current behaviors and patterns surrounding food intake.

1. Which of the following behaviors or comments correlate with the signs and symptoms of anorexia nervosa? *Select all that apply.*
  - A. "I think I am lactose intolerant and last year I decided to stop eating meat, sugar, and butter."
  - B. Anna reports restricting and counting calories.
  - C. Anna's mother indicated she has been exercising excessively.
  - D. Daily laxative use
  - E. Weight 46.8 kg; height 173 cm
  
2. Another important component of successful treatment of an eating disorder is psychotherapy. Psychotherapy helps to assist in reduction of distorted body image and dysfunctional eating habits. What components of psychotherapy are beneficial? *Select all that are appropriate.*
  - A. Acceptance skills for stressful circumstances that can't be immediately changed.
  - B. Change skills to better manage emotions or relationship issues.
  - C. Emotional regulation, distress tolerance, and effectiveness in relationships
  - D. Involvement of family
  - E. Skills-based, problem-focused and time-limited interventions
  
3. Which of the following best describes an eating disorder?
  - A. A choice individuals make regarding the types of food they eat.
  - B. A type of mental illness that involves emotional and behavioral problems revolving around weight and food.
  - C. Eating disorders are a condition in which individuals become severely malnourished and underweight.
  - D. Eating disorders only affect females.
  
4. Bradley, a 5-year-old male, presents to Urgent Care with his mother, who reports her son has lost weight and shows little interest in food. Mom describes Bradley as a picky eater but is concerned that he is too skinny. What would be a potential diagnosis for Bradley?
  - A. Anorexia nervosa
  - B. Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder
  - C. Binge eating disorder.
  - D. Bulimia nervosa

5. Some complications of eating disorders are reversible with weight restoration and cessation of eating disorder behaviors. However, other complications are not reversible. Which complication is not fully reversible?
- A. Bradycardia
  - B. Orthostatic hypotension
  - C. Osteoporosis
  - D. Starvation hepatitis
6. Jaqueline has been brought to the eating disorder clinic by her parents, who are very worried about her health. Upon talking with Jaqueline about her eating habits and reviewing her medical information you determine that she has been diagnosed with anorexia nervosa. Which of the following eating patterns best describes anorexia nervosa?
- A. Behavior of eating large amounts of food during a short period of time, then trying to rid of the extra calories through abusing laxatives.
  - B. Eating large amounts of food, even when not hungry, in a short amount of time, which leads to feelings of guilt or depression.
  - C. Eating only foods of a certain type of texture and consistency.
  - D. Substantial weight loss by dieting, over-exercising or laxative/diuretic abuse
7. Joshua is beginning treatment for bulimia nervosa. Psychotherapy and psychoeducation is imperative for successful treatment of an eating disorder through reduction of distorted body image and dysfunctional eating habits. Psychotherapy treatment includes dialectical behavioral therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy. What does cognitive behavioral therapy entail?
- A. Addresses altered perceptions through understanding the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
  - B. Helps reduce feelings of fear through exposure.
  - C. Systematic and planned performance of body movements or exercises, which aims to improve and restore physical function.
  - D. Teaches skills such as emotional regulation, distress tolerance and effectiveness in relationships.
8. Tamara is a junior in high school and has struggled with her weight for the past few years. She has tried diets but they don't seem to work and she has tried eating smaller portions but that just seems to make her hungrier. Tamara ends up consuming large amounts of food because she is so hungry and feels like she can't stop eating. Tamara is very athletic, lettering in both softball and track. She

just wishes she could control her weight. What eating disorder might Tamara be diagnosed as having?

- A. Anorexia nervosa
- B. Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder
- C. Binge eating disorder.
- D. Bulimia nervosa

9. Tamara is receiving treatment for binge eating disorder. Which of the following would be a treatment goal for her?

- A. Cessation of purging behavior
- B. Correct nutrient deficiencies.
- C. Normalize eating behavior.
- D. Weight gain of 1 to 2 kg/week

### Eating Disorder Answers

As the nurse taking care of Anna, you are worried about her current behaviors and patterns surrounding food intake.

1. Which of the following behaviors or comments correlate with the signs and symptoms of anorexia nervosa? *Select all that apply.*
  - A. "I think I am lactose intolerant and last year I decided to stop eating meat, sugar, and butter."
  - B. Anna reports restricting and counting calories.
  - C. Anna's mother indicated she has been exercising excessively.
  - D. Daily laxative use
  - E. Weight 46.8 kg; height 173 cm

*All are correct. Each of these behaviors, findings, and comments are indicative of anorexia nervosa. Patients with anorexia nervosa have medically significant voluntary weight loss by dieting, over-exercising, and/or laxative/diuretic abuse with a duration of greater than or equal to three months.*

2. Another important component of successful treatment of an eating disorder is psychotherapy. Psychotherapy helps to assist in reduction of distorted body

image and dysfunctional eating habits. What components of psychotherapy are beneficial? *Select all that are appropriate.*

- A. Acceptance skills for stressful circumstances that can't be immediately changed.
- B. Change skills to better manage emotions or relationship issues.
- C. Emotional regulation, distress tolerance, and effectiveness in relationships
- D. Involvement of family
- E. Skills-based, problem-focused and time-limited interventions

*All are correct!*

*Each of these are important components of psychotherapy. Psychotherapy includes dialectical behavioral therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy within the individual and group setting. In addition, families are vital during the recovery and maintenance stages of eating disorders and they play an important role in managing and disrupting eating disorder thoughts and behaviors.*

3. Which of the following best describes an eating disorder?

- A. A choice individuals make regarding the types of food they eat.
- B. A type of mental illness that involves emotional and behavioral problems revolving around weight and food.
- C. Eating disorders are a condition in which individuals become severely malnourished and underweight.
- D. Eating disorders only affect females.

B is correct. Eating disorders are a group of conditions that can cause serious physical, behavioral and emotional problems. It is a type of mental illness that involves issues about weight and food.

4. Bradley, a 5-year-old male, presents to Urgent Care with his mother, who reports her son has lost weight and shows little interest in food. Mom describes Bradley as a picky eater but is concerned that he is too skinny. What would be a potential diagnosis for Bradley?

- A. Anorexia nervosa
- B. Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder
- C. Binge eating disorder.
- D. Bulimia nervosa

B is correct. Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID) is a disturbance of feeding behavior not explained by lack of food, cultural norms, or a diagnosed psychiatric or medical disorder explaining the weight loss or lack of weight gain. Patients often present with lack of interest in food or abnormal rejection of food due to its sensory properties.

5. Some complications of eating disorders are reversible with weight restoration and cessation of eating disorder behaviors. However, other complications are not reversible. Which complication is not fully reversible?
- A. Bradycardia
  - B. Orthostatic hypotension
  - C. Osteoporosis
  - D. Starvation hepatitis

C is correct. Failure to achieve peak bone mass during adolescence may have long-lasting implications. Bone density loss and osteoporosis may not be fully reversible even with restoration to normal weight.

6. Jaqueline has been brought to the eating disorder clinic by her parents, who are very worried about her health. Upon talking with Jaqueline about her eating habits and reviewing her medical information you determine that she has been diagnosed with anorexia nervosa. Which of the following eating patterns best describes anorexia nervosa?
- A. Behavior of eating large amounts of food during a short period of time, then trying to rid of the extra calories through abusing laxatives.
  - B. Eating large amounts of food, even when not hungry, in a short amount of time, which leads to feelings of guilt or depression.
  - C. Eating only foods of a certain type of texture and consistency.
  - A. Substantial weight loss by dieting, over-exercising or laxative/diuretic abuse.

D is correct. Anorexia nervosa is defined as substantial and medically significant voluntary weight loss by dieting, over-exercising, or laxative/diuretic abuse.

7. Joshua is beginning treatment for bulimia nervosa. Psychotherapy and psychoeducation is imperative for successful treatment of an eating disorder through reduction of distorted body image and dysfunctional eating habits. Psychotherapy treatment includes dialectical behavioral therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy. What does cognitive behavioral therapy entail?

- A. Addresses altered perceptions through understanding the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
- B. Helps reduce feelings of fear through exposure.
- C. Systematic and planned performance of body movements or exercises, which aims to improve and restore physical function.
- D. Teaches skills such as emotional regulation, distress tolerance and effectiveness in relationships.

A is correct. Cognitive behavioral therapy addresses altered perceptions through understanding the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviors. In addition, it is a skills-based, problem-focused and time-limited intervention.

8. Tamara is a junior in high school and has struggled with her weight for the past few years. She has tried diets but they don't seem to work and she has tried eating smaller portions but that just seems to make her hungrier. Tamara ends up consuming large amounts of food because she is so hungry and feels like she can't stop eating. Tamara is very athletic, lettering in both softball and track. She just wishes she could control her weight. What eating disorder might Tamara be diagnosed as having?

- A. Anorexia nervosa
- B. Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder
- C. Binge eating disorder.
- D. Bulimia nervosa

C is correct. Tamara has a binge eating disorder. The most prevalent eating disorder, binge eating involves the consumption of large amounts of food accompanied by a lack of control overeating and no compensatory mechanisms after the binge.

9. . Tamara is receiving treatment for binge eating disorder. Which of the following would be a treatment goal for her?

- A. Cessation of purging behavior
- B. Correct nutrient deficiencies
- C. Normalize eating behavior
- D. Weight gain of 1 to 2 kg/week

C is correct. Treatment goals for binge eating disorder include normalizing eating behavior and maintaining an appropriate weight for age and height. In addition, it is important to teach body cues for satiety and to understand how to choose portion sizes.