
Bulimia Nervosa

**Mental disorders & Psychopathology
(Bulimia Nervosa)**

Supporting paper

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Introduction

Bulimia Nervosa

For my presentation the thematic mental disorder picked was Bulimia nervosa. This mental disorder can be found on the ICD10 book (International classification disorder 2010). Bulimia nervosa is a mental disorder that can be found on the ICD10 book under Chapter V, classified as F50.2

Bulimia nervosa was described back in 1979 by Professor Gerald Russell who was a British psychiatrist.

Bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder which is considered a compulsive overeating; as well as eating in large quantities amount of food in a short period of time, this by followed of vomiting and constant abuse of laxatives and long periods of starvation. Bulimia nervosa can cause brain lesion. According to “*Centre For Discovery Eating Disorder Treatment*”, there are factors that can be associated in how bulimia nervosa is developed, these can be:

- **Biological factors:** Biological factors do contribute, especially when they are inherited through genetic. According to Walden behavioural care research “*some genes identified in contributions to eating disorder have been shown to be associated with specific personality traits such as obsessive thinking, perfectionism and high levels of sensitivity*” this meaning that genes can have a great contribution to eating disorder which in this case would be bulimia nervosa. According to CEDARS, research has demonstrated that between 40% and 60% individuals do develop eating disorder due to genetics
- **Psychological factors:** “studies have shown that approximately 30% of individuals who partake in binge and purge, also practice self-harm behaviours” according to the Centre for Discovery. It is also known that bulimia nervosa can be linked with anxiety and personality disorder.
- **Developmental factors:** Childhood trauma and abuse can be one of the biggest factors that affect individuals who suffer from bulimia nervosa. Young adults
- **Social factors:** Social factors tend to affect individuals who have bulimia nervosa, especially teenagers where they face the stage of peer pressure. We do face a society where bodies and physical appearance are classified important to incorporate within the society measurements. This type of peer pressure normally affects females the most. Social media is a platform where the competition with appearances belongs to, and it is important to change.

Throughout the research within the facts in regards of bulimia nervosa it was clear that individuals who suffer from the mental disorder in cause, normally have another co-occurring mental health disorders, which could be depression, anxiety etc.

Also, according to *Eating recovery Centre 2022* “Individuals that suffer from bulimia nervosa are more likely to have a family background who already have an eating disorder and physical disorder”. In the same website other statistics found was that “36% to 50% of individuals with bulimia nervosa also suffer from depressive disorder” as well as that “Substance abuse and mi-use, anxiety disorders and mood disorders do contribute for the expansion of bulimia nervosa.”

According to Johns Hopkins Medicine “Bulimia typically affects females and starts during the teenage years. But it can also affect males. Society and cultural ideals that assign value based on body weight and shape play a role in the cause. So does genetics”

One shocking fact that has been found that is probably rarely talked is that bulimia nervosa can cause stomach damage as well as it can lead to heart failure. This meaning that bulimia can cause damage to cardiac myocytes, which are the muscle cells which has the function of contraction, these can lead to heart failure, arrhythmia. Bulimia nervosa can highly contribute to risk factors of cardiovascular diseases and unfortunate sudden death.

Causes of bulimia Nervosa

Through the research it was clear and understandable that there many causes that the major influence is our society. We tend assign social and cultural ideals in individuals base of their body shape and body weight. Therefore, here are the main influences of growth and expansion of bulimia nervosa, which are:

- Social isolation- due have another co-occurring mental health disorder which could be anxiety, depression, substance, and alcohol abuse. Shame eating in front of other.
- Changes in mood and personality- sudden sadness and hunger or stress which can trigger the vicious cycle of purging and binge.
- Impulsive behaviour- sudden will to purge
- Fear of gaining weight- Individuals in majority of the cases normally fear to gain weight, all because they might have been judged and criticised for their eating habits, self-image, and weight therefore they restrict themselves from calories this by starting a rigorous dieting plan. Triggers to beginning of bingeing can be related to fear of gaining weight can relate also to stress, lack of self-esteem,
- Abuse- this could be domestic abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, and other related types of abuse

Warning signs and symptoms of bulimia nervosa

Family, friends, partners or close individuals related to people who suffer from bulimia nervosa should be able to identify warning signs and symptoms related to bulimia nervosa, in my PowerPoint presentation I gave a wide range of sign and symptoms that might visible to identify which are:

- Episode of binge eating: This meaning eating great/large quantities of food in such a small period of time
- Misuse of laxative or diuretics products: These products can be:, bisacodyl, lactulose, Senna, Dulcolax Senokot. These examples of laxatives can act fast in a period of 30 minutes to 3 hours following by a unique single dose.
- Depressive episodes- anxious and depression crises
- Fasting- this to avoid calories in peculiar rituals and eating habits
- Inducing themselves to vomit to reduce intake of calories, usually secretly
- Exposing guilty feeling and shame of eating
- Dental problems which affect the enamel due to vomiting

As disclaimer is it important that we recognise that everyone reacts differently and process in different ways in order to mask their symptoms and warning signs.

Withing the NHS, there are treatments that are being offered for people who suffer from bulimia nervosa. According to National health service they offer treatments for bulimia nervosa these are guided self-help program that involves working within combined sessions with healthcare professionals. The following treatments offered are:

- Family therapy
- Cognitive Behavioural therapy
- Antidepressants (this if the individual already suffers from another mental disorder such as anxiety or depression)

These programs consist on:

Monitor what the service user eats- This involves the understanding of what you eat and changing patterns in their behaviour.

Understanding triggers- Understanding the triggers it supports the serviced user to recognise the signs and to prevent the repetitive cycle. It is important to understand these triggers and it helps the patient to engage within the treatment.

Another disclaimer made when doing this presentation was that these treatments are do not bring results within in day. These treatments are measured by length and consistency of the individual.

Treatments can bring effectiveness within several month and even years, again reinforcing the fact that everybody processes differently within their coping mechanisms and dedication.

Another important treatments and follow ups that might be essential are:

Accompaniment with a professional nutritional counselling, inpatient medical care; outpatient medical care and monitorisation of weight, nutrition blood tests (lab work) and the most important that the individual needs to be able to achieve is self-care.

In regards of diagnosis of bulimia nervosa, is normally followed up by a request through the individual's local general practice, in which it will be requested the following:

- Brief discussion about your daily routine, eating habits
- Urine Sample
- Blood sample
- Physical exam
- Heart test (an electrocardiogram)

The history of bulimia nervosa existed through Eating disorders which existed from a long time within from the time of Caesar in 700BC (before Christ)

According to PubMed "bulimia nervosa was first described in 1979 by Gerald Russel."

It was first described as chronic phase of anorexia nervosa

Bulimia nervosa first became a problem around 1970's & 80's in the US, England, France, and Germany.

"Russel referred to bulimia nervosa as "powerful and intractable urges to overeat" in combination with a "morbid fear of becoming fat" – *Eating Recovery Center*

In this presentation my thought was also to prove that bulimia nervosa is a mental disorder that "doesn't pick or choose" who will have to deal with the mental disorder. My chosen public figure was Princess of Wales, Diana Spencer, from the royal family in United Kingdom, who sadly is no longer with us. In interviews Princess Diana makes it crucial the awareness around eating disorders. Diana was struggling living with bulimia nervosa. According to *Insider*, 2020, Princess Diana had bulimia nervosa during her first pregnancy. Bulimia Nervosa can affect individuals in many ways. My intention when choosing a public figure was to prove that bulimia nervosa can affect anyone regardless of their age, gender ethnic background and financial economic status. Here is an excerpt from *Vogue* 2020 of how bulimia affected her life:

“Yes, I did,” she replied. “I had bulimia for a number of years. And that's like a secret disease. You inflict it upon yourself because your self-esteem is at a low ebb, and you don't think you're worthy or valuable. You fill your stomach up four or five times a day—some do it more—and it gives you a feeling of comfort. It's like having a pair of arms around you, but it's temporarily, temporary. Then you're disgusted at the bloatedness of your stomach, and then you bring it all up again.”

When it comes to principles when working with people who suffer from bulimia nervosa it is knowledgeable that individuals have the right to be involved and informed about their and what type of care and support they are subjected to be provided with. Ensuring that people who suffer from eating disorders have access to treatment equally and fairly, regardless of their age, religion, sexual orientation, belief, culture and family background.

It is also very important to assess the impact of the environment that the individual deals with, these environments could be professional, familiar and social environments and others related to the subject.

Bulimia happens and can be easily developed due to the pressure of society, therefore it is essential to dialogue on simple prevention forms such as having regular homemade meals, reinforce healthy body image, especially to young adults (from the age of 13 to 18) they easily fall for other individuals opinions, this will help them to have a strong confidence and good self-esteem; discourage the unhealthy dieting, long periods of fasting and use of laxatives or supplements. It is important that people who surround the individual who suffers from the subjected mental disorder, to help to maintain a good mental health, which also can help to develop strong relationships with friends and family and where trust grows.

Within treatments going on is also important to also have support when you are an individual who suffers from bulimia nervosa, support is necessary as well as involving you're your family and friends in your care and healing There are support groups available for people who deal with bulimia nervosa such as:

- Your General Practice (GP)
- Samaritans : <https://www.samaritans.org/>
- Specialist Therapists at BetterHelp: www.betterhelp.com
- Online group supports at Beat Eating Disorder: www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Recommendations and conclusion

This supporting paper document is based on research, and it is not a substitute of medical assessment or diagnose. It is recommended to visit local general practice if in belief of relation to mental disorder mentioned.

Bulimia nervosa is a mental disorder that deserves close observation and support from healthcare providers.

Is necessary to remind people who suffer from mental disorders that they can recover from it.

Complementary therapies might be suitable for individuals.

It is important to do activities with individuals to help to relief from the pressure

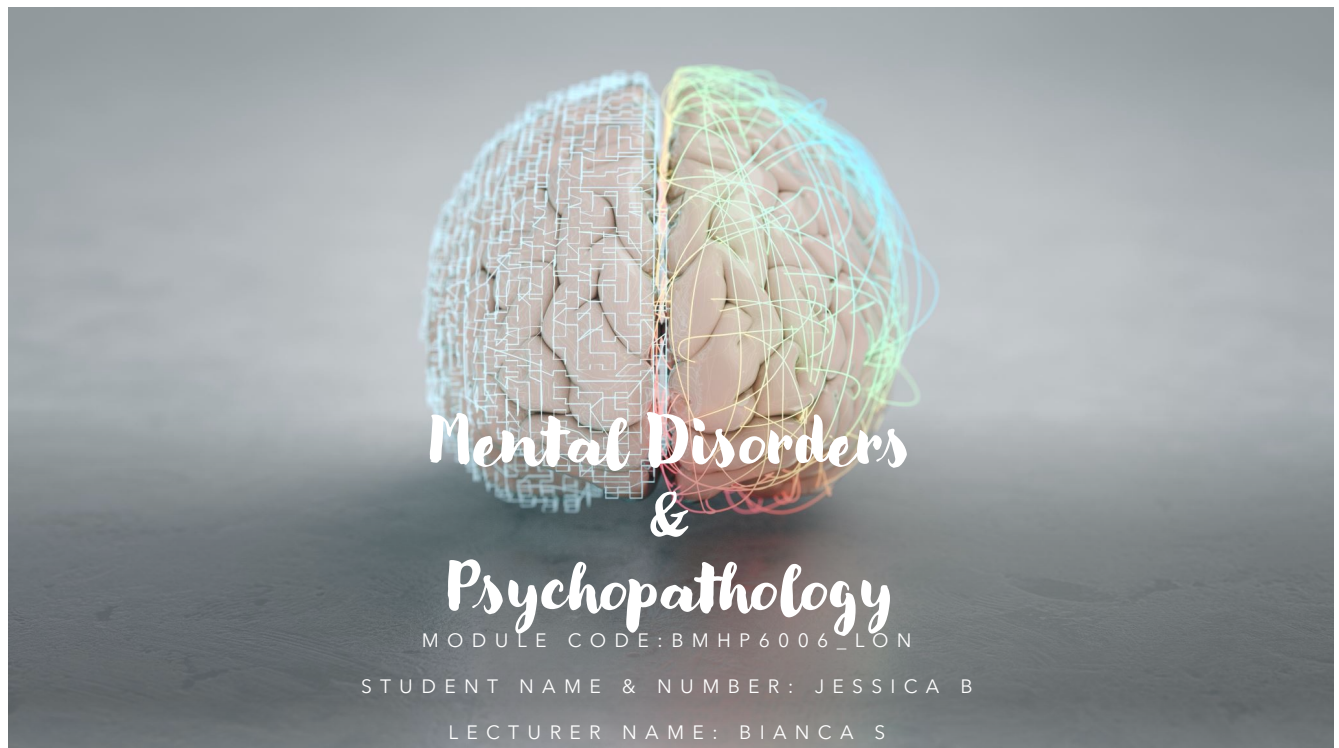
Patients that suffer from the mental disorder in cause should be able to knows how to reach and contact their providers if they have any query.

Motivation also is key to progress and have an effective recover.

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PowerPoint slides index



Behavioural syndromes associated with physiological disturbances and physical factors

- The chosen mental disorder is Bulimia Nervosa.
- In the The international Classification of Disease 2010 book it can be found on Chapter V, classified as F50.2 (group F50-F59)
- According to ICD-10 book (The international Classification of Disease 2010) is considered a mental Health disorder.
- Bulimia nervosa is a mental and eating disorder that often affects young people from the age of 13 to 17 specially females, according to the National Health Service (2022)



Definition

- Bulimia nervosa is a eating disorder is a compulsive overeating/eating large amounts of food in a short period of time, followed by vomiting. Bulimia causes brain lesion.
- Individuals with this mental disorder normally don't seek help until they reach a certain age.



Hopkins Medicine 2022

Facts and Statistics of bulimia nervosa

- "95% of people with bulimia have at least 1 co-occurring mental health disorder"
- "36% to 50% of individuals with bulimia nervosa also suffer from depressive disorder"
- Individuals with bulimia nervosa are more likely to have a family background who have eating disorders, physical disorders.
- Substance abuse and mis-use, anxiety disorders and mood disorders do contribute to the expansion of bulimia nervosa.
- Bulimia nervosa can cause stomach damage as well as it can lead to heart failure.

Eating recovery centre 2022

Causes of bulimia nervosa

There are many causes that can influence bulimia nervosa:

- Social Isolation
- Change in mood & personality
- Impulsive behaviour
- Fear of gaining weight

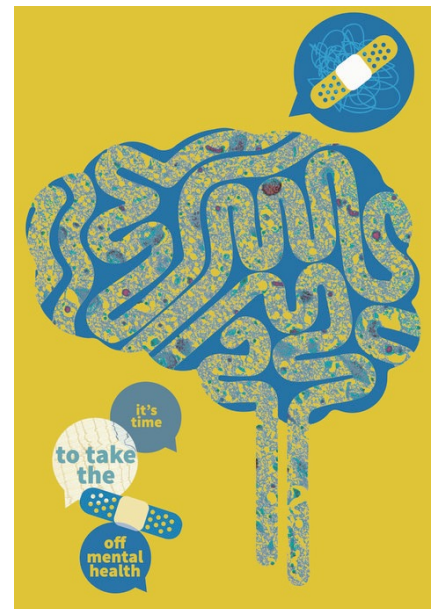
Mayo clinic 2022

Note: Individuals with this mental disorder normally don't seek help until they reach a certain age (30 or 50)

Warning Signs & symptoms of bulimia nervosa

The signs and symptoms that can be related to bulimia nervosa would be:

- Episodes of binge eating
- Misuse of laxative products
- Depressive episodes
- Exposing guilty/shame feeling of eating
- Inducing themselves to vomit
- Fasting in order to avoid calories



Treatments offered by the National health service in UK

According to NHS they offer treatments for bulimia nervosa these are guided self-help program that involves working within combined sessions with healthcare professionals. The following treatments offered are;

- Family therapy
- Cognitive Behavioural therapy
- Antidepressants (this if the the person anxiety or depression as well within the current mental disorder)

These programs consists on:

- Monitor what the service user eats- This involves the understanding of what you eat and changing patterns in their behaviour
- Understanding triggers- Understanding the triggers it supports the serviced user to recognise the signs and to prevent the repetitive cycle.

NHS 2022

Bulimia nervosa treatments within the NHS



Diagnosis of Bulimia Nervosa

Normally a diagnosis is done through your local general practice they will request the following:

- Brief discussion about your daily routine, eating habits
- Urine Sample
- Blood sample
- Physical exam
- Heart test (an electrocardiogram)

History of Bulimia nervosa

- Eating disorders existed from a long time this from the time of Caesar in 700BC
- According to PubMed "bulimia nervosa was first described in 1979 by Gerald Russel."
- It was first described as chronic phase of anorexia nervosa
- Bulimia nervosa first became a problem around 1970's & 80's in the US, England, France and Germany.
- " Russel referred to bulimia nervosa as "powerful and intractable urges to overeat" in combination with a "morbid fear of becoming fat" – Eating Recovery Center

How bulimia affects individuals

- Bulimia Nervosa can affect individuals in many ways and here's an example
- An example that could be used could be Princess Diana from United Kingdom Royal family.
- This example was mainly used to show that bulimia nervosa can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, ethnic background, financial economic status .



Vogue 2020

“Yes, I did,” she replied. “I had bulimia for a number of years. And that's like a secret disease. You inflict it upon yourself because your self-esteem is at a low ebb, and you don't think you're worthy or valuable. You fill your stomach up four or five times a day—some do it more—and it gives you a feeling of comfort. It's like having a pair of arms around you, but it's temporarily, temporary. Then you're disgusted at the bloatedness of your stomach, and then you bring it all up again.”

Principles when working with people who suffer from bulimia nervosa

- It is knowledgeable that individuals have the right to be involved and informed about their care plan and what type of care and support they'll be provided with.
- Ensuring that people with eating disorders have access to treatments equally regardless of their age, religion, sexual orientation, belief, culture, family background.
- It important to asses the impact of the environment they deal with.

NICE May 2017

Support for people who deal with bulimia nervosa

There are support groups available for people who deal with bulimia nervosa such as:

- Your General Practice (GP)
- Samaritans : <https://www.samaritans.org/>
- Specialist Therapists at BetterHelp: www.betterhelp.com
- Online group supports at Beat Eating Disorder: www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk



Recommendations & Conclusion

- Bulimia nervosa is a mental disorder that deserves close observation and support from healthcare providers.
- Is necessary to remind people who suffer from mental disorders that they can recover from it.
- Complementary therapies might be suitable for individuals.
- It is important to do activities with individuals
- If you reviewed yourself in this presentation please seek medical health attention as this presentation is based on research and not on a medical assessment nor a diagnosis.

“ Remember your friend does not need you to fully understand their situation, they just need you to support them and be there for them. ”

Beth, 15

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