

Elemental EM: Eating Disorders¹

General²

Anorexia: Restriction of caloric intake leading to **lower than expected body weight**. Fear of weight gain or becoming overweight despite lower body weight. Derangement in the way body weight or appearance is experienced

Bulimia: Recurrent episodes of binge eating with recurrent, inappropriate compensatory behaviors to prevent weight gain including self-induced emesis, abuse of laxatives/diuretics, caloric restriction, or excessive exercise. Binging and purging $\geq 1/\text{wk}$ for 3 wks. Self-evaluation is influenced by body weight and appearance.

Clinical Presentation

- Vague symptoms: Weakness, fatigue, pallor, dizziness, syncope, confusion, bloating, edema, persistent nausea
- Complaints from complications
 - Purging: chest pain or hematemesis from Mallory-Weiss tear
 - Electrolyte induced dysrhythmia: Palpitations
 - Disrupted HPA axis: Dysmenorrhea
 - Osteoporosis/malnutrition: fractures
 - Depression, anxiety, substance abuse, self-injurious behavior, suicidality
- Anorexia: thin body habitus, hypotension, bradycardia, hypothermia, flaking skin
- Bulimia or binge eating disorder: Normal weight or even slightly overweight: hypertrophy of parotid glands, dental erosion, trauma or callous to dorsal hands, facial petechiae, subconjunctival hemorrhage, halitosis

Differential Diagnosis		
Adrenal insufficiency	Celiac Disease	Mononucleosis
Hyperthyroidism	Malignancy	HIV
Diabetes	Hyperemesis Gravidum	TB
Hepatitis	Pancreatitis	Substance abuse
Inflammatory bowel disease	Superior mesenteric artery syndrome	Depression, Bipolar disorder, etc.

Diagnosis

Eating Disorder Screen: SCOFF questionnaire (Score 2 or more)³

- Do you make yourself sick because you feel uncomfortably full?
- Do you worry you have lost control over how much you eat?
- Have you recently lost more than 1 stone (14 lb) in a 3-mo period?
- Do you believe yourself to be fat when others say you are too thin?
- Would you say that food dominates your life?

Labs: CBC, BMP, magnesium, calcium, phosphorous, LFT, lipase, amylase, Urinalysis, Pregnancy test, TSH

Lab Abnormalities

- Purging:
 - Hypokalemic, hypochloremic metabolic alkalosis
 - Elevated LFTs, lipase, amylase
 - Hyponatremia
- Laxative/diuretics: Hypokalemia, hyponatremia
- Starvation ketosis
- Severe: anemia, leukopenia, hypoglycemia, hypophosphatemia

EKG for prolonged QT, electrolyte imbalance

Treatment/Disposition

- Stabilization
- Admission or outpatient referral to mental health specialist → Psychiatry consult
 - May start SSRI
 - AVOID bupropion

American Psychiatric Association Criteria for Admission⁴

- Medical instability
 - Adults: HR <40bpm; BP <90/60 mmHg; glucose <60mg/dL; K <3 mEq/L; electrolyte imbalance
 - Children and Adolescents: HR near 40bpm; orthostatic BP changes; BP <80/50 mmHg; hypokalemia; hypophosphatemia; hypomagnesemia
 - All: Temperature <97°F; dehydration; hepatic, renal, or cardiovascular organ compromise; poorly controlled diabetes
- Weight <85% of ideal or acute decline with food refusal even if not <85%
- Comorbid psychiatric conditions or suicidality
- Severe family conflict or problems, absence of family or adequate support
- Poor motivation or high resistance to treatment interventions unless highly structured
- Absence of alternative treatment settings

References/Resources:

1. Lewis GC. Eating Disorders. In: Tintinalli JE, Stapczynski J, Ma O, Yealy DM, Meckler GD, Cline DM. eds. *Tintinalli's Emergency Medicine: A Comprehensive Study Guide, 8e* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill; 2016. <http://eresources.library.mssm.edu:2744/content.aspx?bookid=1658§ionid=109448456>. Accessed May 23, 2017.
2. American Psychiatric Association, DSM-5 Task Force: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th ed. Washington, DC: 2013.
3. Morgan JF, Reid F, Lacey JH. The SCOFF questionnaire: a new screening tool for eating disorders. *West J Med.* 2000; 172(3): 164-5. PMID: 18751246.
4. Yager, J. et al. Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Patients with Eating Disorders, 3rd Edition. *Am J Psychiatry.* 20006; 163(7 Suppl):4-54. PMID: 16925191