

# The role of emotions in eating behavior and impact on obesity and weight management

## Abstract

Obesity is an outstanding issue for the last decades. The difficulty of reaching a healthy weight beyond numerous trials is getting more and more. Emotions are fully connected with overeating as individuals seem to adopt behaviors through their dietary plans, under their psychological situation. Bulimia nervosa or binge eating are of the most crucial categories obese people suffering from, giving scientific society a window to face obesity not only when it appears but also preventively. Any type of exercise in combination with balanced nutrition plan is facing obesity in holistic way giving the chance to individual to know himself under inconvenient conditions. Nevertheless, more research is needed to structure plans that will face obesity in a holistic way and act as a precursor for giving more space to prevention.

**Keywords:** obesity, emotions, emotional eating, weight management, binge eating, overeating, personality disorder, exercise, holistic, prevention

Volume 8 Issue 3 - 2018

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**Received:** May 17, 2018 | **Published:** May 23, 2018

## Introduction

Emotions are related with overeating getting at risk of becoming overweight or obese leading to the exposure of other diseases.<sup>1</sup> Many studies have reached this result through research. A major problem through the last decades is lack of information about the relationship of emotions, weight, body image and the way an individual feeds himself. As a result, weight loses its pace leading to expression of diseases such as obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. The purpose of this opinion letter is to emphasize to the relationship of emotions and overeating as precursor of approaching obesity not only as a disease but also as a behavior disorder.

Emotional Eating refers to eating due to usually negative or positive emotions.<sup>2</sup> In self reporting issues, inaccuracy predominates when people report how they eat and how they actually eat. Unfortunately, no many studies focus on these aspects of obese or overweight people as many of researches have been examined this type of relationship in healthy sample, but not in clinical obese people.<sup>3</sup> As a response to emotions, eating has many aspects that underline that relationship such as BMI, feeling guilty after the expression, weight gain or interference with weight loss. Obviously, is not that much straight forward clear the way that emotional eating is being recognized.<sup>4</sup> Personality Disorders are characterized by instability and impulsivity, marked by manifestations of imbalanced way of eating. Eating pathology and Personality Disorders have been considered as complementary tools for giving summaries for eating disorders such as bulimia nervosa for example.<sup>5</sup> Binge eating, another eating disorder, is characterized by feelings of loss control and consumption of big amounts of food, typically within a discrete amount of time.<sup>6</sup> Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is totally connected with Personality Disorders, containing eating more rapidly than normal, eating until feeling uncomfortably full or eating alone as a result of embarrassment. Big amount of Binge Eaters are obese people.<sup>7</sup>

It is a fact that overeating and emotions have something to say but not only for the negative emotions but also for the positive. More specifically, studies are more interested in negative mood instead of positive mood and overeating.<sup>8</sup> In a study, examined if there is any

change in overeating during negative, positive or neutral conditions in emotional eaters comparing with non-emotional eaters. The findings underline the importance of keeping an eye for both positive and negative conditions as emotional eaters, ate more in positive mood, than non-emotional eaters. On the other hand, through negative conditions emotional eaters did not increase their calories at all. Furthermore, satiety signals and internal hunger own an active role in overeating or binge eating. Several studies have been focus on satiety signals on obese people and it has been found that satiety, neural system and other physiological status function in different way than other people. In other words, hunger signals and gastric motility are not going with the same rhythm as in non-obese people. However, more research has to be done in order to reach some findings that will be encountered as proved findings.<sup>9,10</sup>

## Conclusion

In summary, human nutrition is totally associated with the way people think or act through their chosen lifestyles. That is how behaviors in a social event are accurately connected with nutritional behaviors on a daily basis. Social events promote behaviors that are friendly in more eating. Nevertheless, socializing and positive expressed emotions through a particular type of exercise or a social event could lead to changes to body and mind of people who are obese or keen to overeating or to any eating and personality disorder. Emotions and overeating are crucial fields in facing obesity and related diseases. Health professionals must pay attention to the psychological situation of the individual creating a profile that will contribute to the most thorough way of treatment. Moreover, exercise in accordance with balanced nutrition plan is a perfect combination for starting getting over thoughts and habits that lead the individual to adopt habits from which benefits will be gained such as reshaping of the body, more positive thinking and positive emotions through a balanced environment. It is not a matter of quantity but of quality. Further research must be done not only under the cooperation of different specialties, but also with the mentality which will provide alternative choices to face the major problem of obesity through a holistic way.

## Acknowledgments

None.

## Conflicts of interest

The author declares there is no conflict of interest.

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