

Title: The Correlation of Fad Diets and Eating Disorders



PRESENTER:

Lorena Wance

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Rufaro Chitiyo

BACKGROUND:

Is there a correlation between fad diets and eating disorders? Fad diets are popular societal trends that promote eating styles that promise results in weight loss at an expedited rate and extraordinary health benefits through dietary and lifestyle changes via various methods. Eating disorders are commonly known for their association with unhealthy eating habits due to psychological aspects. Due to the nature of fad diets being unsustainable, strict, and limiting in certain facets, the aim of this project is to explore literature that opposes or supports whether fad diets and eating disorders are related.

METHODS

- Literature synthesis
- Key words used: correlation, linked, associated with, related, fad diets, eating disorders, clean eating, disordered eating, dieting, anorexia, bulimia, orthorexia, binge eating
- Used Volpe Library search engine, Google Scholar, and Google search engine

Common eating disorders

EATING DISORDERS

Bulimia Nervosa

Bulimia Nervosa is an eating disorder and a severe mental illness. It can go undetected for a long time. People with this condition need treatment so they are able to begin the journey to recovery.

People with bulimia nervosa eat large amounts of food in a relatively short period of time (binge eating). They feel that they have no control over the amount of food they consume, or the ability to stop.

Anorexia Nervosa

Anorexia nervosa is a life-threatening eating disorder and a serious mental illness. It causes severe weight loss.

Having an eating disorder is not about vanity. People with anorexia nervosa commonly have an unhealthy focus on food, weight or body shape. They have an intense fear of gaining weight, even though they are significantly underweight.

Binge Eating Disorder

Binge Eating Disorder is a serious mental illness. People with binge eating disorder regularly (at least once a week) eat large quantities of food, rapidly, in a short period of time. They feel out of control and unable to stop themselves from eating. This is often linked with high levels of distress.

People with binge eating disorder do not typically try to 'compensate' for their eating with behaviors such as vomiting or excessive exercise.

Western Oregon University. (2021). *Eating Disorders* [Illustration]. Student Health & Counseling Center: Mental Wellness. <https://wou.edu/health/resources/student-health-101/mental-health/eating-disorders/>.

COMMON FAD DIETS

"INSIDER recently polled 1,102 people about their 2019 resolutions, and 473 respondents said theirs were related to eating healthier or dieting.¹⁰"

How Americans plan to diet in 2019

METHOD	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS
Low carb diet	27.7%
Calorie restriction	26.9%
Keto Diet	16.9%
Low fat diet	15.9%
Eating less meat	13.3%
Weight Watchers	13.1%
Other	11.4%
Vegetarian	10.6%
Mediterranean	8.5%
Gluten-free	7.6%
Atkins	4.7%
Whole30	4.4%
Vegan	3.8%
Paleo	3.2%
The 5-2	2.8%
South Beach	1.9%

Source: INSIDER Poll conducted on SurveyMonkey Audience with 1,102 respondents, November 23–24, 2018.

Insider Inc.



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RESULTS:

Research acknowledges that there is a correlation between certain fad diets and eating disorders, but the limiting factors include the type of fad diet, the diagnosis of which eating disorder, and whether these variables affect individuals positively or negatively for long-term. The correlation seems to favor the idea that certain risks associated with fad dieting can impact individuals who might already have precursors for negative eating behaviors and habits.

SIGNIFICANCE:

It is important to conduct more research and analysis to fully fill in the gaps in order to be able to further educate individuals on the risks and rewards of fad dieting on longevity in male and female populations.

CONCLUSION:

Fad diets and eating disorders may be correlated but may not be heavily supported due to gaps in research and limited information available on the direct correlation of the factors.

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