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Editorial issue 6

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EDITORIAL

Editorial issue 6

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the sixth issue of the year 2011 which focuses on Eating Disorders.

I am delighted to present to you the **WFSBP Treatment Guidelines for the Pharmacological Treatment of Eating Disorders**. With this comprehensive manual which includes numerous recommendations, the WFSBP aims to provide up-to-date treatment options and thus to further improve treatment for patients world-wide and to spread knowledge also in countries with limited continuing education possibilities. I wish to thank Martin Aigner, secretary of the WFSBP Task Force on Eating Disorders, and the entire taskforce for their superb work.

Marek K. Brandys and colleagues from The Netherlands present a review article on brain derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) and its role in the development and maintenance in **anorexia nervosa** (AN). This meta-analysis summarises recent studies which investigated serum BDNF concentrations in people currently ill with AN, in comparison to healthy controls. The findings show that BDNF concentrations in women diagnosed with AN are significantly reduced in comparison with healthy controls. Current data do not allow inferences to be made about causal links between levels of circulating BDNF and AN. However, possible explanations for the relationship between BDNF and AN have been presented.

Palmiero Monteleone and colleagues from Italy focused on the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) basal activity in malnourished patients with **anorexia nervosa** (AN) through the measurement of diurnal salivary levels of α-amylase, whose secretion is regulated by the SNS. Further also salivary cortisol was measured. The results suggest that the activity of the SNS, evaluated through the assessment of the diurnal secretion of salivary α-amylase, is impaired in the acute phase of AN, whereas the cortisol awakening response is enhanced.

Women with **eating disorders** (ED) are reported to have strengths in local or detailed information processing and difficulties with coherence or global processing/integration. Amy Harrison and colleagues from the UK present an original investigation aimed to replicate these findings and additionally explore a global integration task, the Fragmented Pictures Task. For this study 222 women were included. The study shows that women currently ill with ED and recovered from ED are skilled at detail processing. Global integration difficulties were only observed in patients with acute anorexia nervosa, whereas patients with bulimia nervosa and women recovered from bulimia nervosa performed similarly to healthy participants.

Yours sincerely,

Siegfried Kasper, MD
Chief Editor

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