

## Eating disorders can increase by the stress of confinement

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- In Mexico, according to IMSS, 9 of every 10 people with eating disorders are women.
- These disorders usually begin between the ages of 12 to 25.
- Kidney stones and osteoporosis are some of the chronic diseases that can be developed as a consequence of these disorders.

Eating disorders are a group of conditions that involve changes in eating habits or behaviors. These conditions have a negative impact on the health of an individual, since they prevent an adequate nutrition. According to the Mayo Clinic, the most common eating disorders are: anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and compulsive eating disorder; also known as binge eating disorder.

In light of the World Eating Disorders Day, the physician Irma Luisa Ceja Martínez, Manager of Endocrinology and Nutrition at Grupo PiSA, explained that some of these disorders have a psychological origin, and can be generated by different social –and even- genetic factors. People who suffer of these disorders have a problem with food and their behavior in relation to food, for which they eat much less, or much more than necessary.

*“Eating disorders usually appear during adolescence, and if they’re not identified and treated appropriately, they can cause severe damage in the digestive tract, mouth, bones and teeth; leading to other diseases that can be part of a subject’s life, such as osteoporosis, loss of tooth enamel, or kidney stones”,* explained the physician; who is also the Mexican Governor of the American College of Physicians.

Ceja Martínez, the internal medicine specialist, detailed that anorexia nervosa is characterized by a great fear of gaining weight, causing that the people who suffer from this disorder eat very little; and despite being extremely thin, they see themselves as overweight, making them limit their calorie intake and using unhealthy methods to lose weight such as abuse of laxatives or over exercising.

*“Anorexia can lead to acid reflux, anemia, constipation, heart disease, and a greater risk of bone fractures. In the case of bulimia nervosa, people usually have episodes in which they ingest large quantities of food, but then attempt to get rid of those calories by self-provocation of vomit or the unmeasured use of laxatives. These conditions occur mainly on women from 12 to 25, and are very difficult to overcome by themselves; they require a multidisciplinary team of doctors, nutritionists, and psychiatry specialists,”* pointed Ceja Martínez.

For her part, Karen Cecilia Picazo Huerta, nutrition specialist graduated from Universidad del Valle de Atemajac (UNIVA) and Nutrition Coordinator at Bodylogic, a Grupo PiSA company, explained that Binge Eating Disorder occurs mainly in people who have obesity or are overweight, as symptoms consist of eating disproportionately large amounts of food in a very short period of time.

*“Patients who are affected by compulsive eating disorder tend to eat in an excessive manner, even though they are not hungry or feel already satisfied, causing to feel guilt or shame. This leads to a*

*compensation by attempting very restrictive diets, which generate more anxiety, and therefore, more binge eating; making it very difficult to lose weight”, assured the nutrition specialist.*

In Mexico, the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS, for its acronym in Spanish) reported that in 2018, there were around 22,000 cases of eating disorders, and that 9 of every 10 patients were women.

Both specialists insisted on the need to address these disorders with a comprehensive approach, given that their root is a psychological problem. *“Patients who suffer these type of eating disorders tend to hide their behavior: they make excuses to avoid eating among their families and friends, they take on very restrictive diets and often complain about their body, they talk too much about losing weight, and sometimes stop eating food to consume only nutrition supplements; which is absolutely contraindicated,”* explain Cecilia Picazo Huerta.

In addition, doctor Rodrigo Durán Muñiz, Medical Manager of Psychiatry at Grupo PiSA, said that some risk factors for the development of these eating disorders are related to their family background, to show another disorder that affects the psico-affective environment of a patient such a major depression or an anxiety disorder, or taking on diets without proper surveillance or a proper medical recommendation.

*“We must be very attentive of our food habits, especially in young people. To give excuses not to eat, to take on a very restrictive vegetarian diet, and to focus only in healthy eating or unmeasured exercising, tend to be early signs of an eating disorder. Hiding while eating, to spend a lot of time in front of the mirror in order to criticize their body, going to the bathroom in the middle of eating, or having callous knuckles as a consequence for vomit, can indicate a more severe issue that must be addressed immediately,”* specified Durán Muñiz.