

Press Release

Cause and Cure for Eating Disorders

Mandometer Treatment for Eating Disorders - A new effective evidence based treatment for eating disorders will be presented to patients and their relatives in Auckland on 7 November, 2007, at Clinical Education Centre at Auckland Hospital, 8.00 am - 12.00.

Based on scientific research, we have developed an effective treatment for patients with eating disorders during the last 20 years at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. This treatment, known as the Mandometer treatment is now used in Sweden, other European countries, Australia and the USA. The treatment has been evaluated in a clinical trial and found to bring 75% of the patients into remission on average in one year. To be discharged from the Mandometer Clinic, patients must fulfil strict remission criteria. To date, we have treated 350 patients to remission. Patients in remission run a less than 10% risk of relapsing during a follow up period of five years. Mandometer is a standard treatment in Sweden and fully Government subsidised.

Knowledge about the brain mechanisms engaged during eating and the biological changes associated with starvation allow the conclusions that anorexia and bulimia are two phases of the same condition and that all symptoms are reversible consequences of starvation. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with some one who has an eating disorder. Eating disorders are eating disorders and patients need to re-learn normal eating habits. This is achieved by practicing eating using Mandometer, a computer-based procedure that provides feed-back on how much to eat, at what rate to eat and how to feel full during a meal. Mandometer permits you to practice eating anytime, anywhere. When eating behaviour is normalized, psychiatric symptoms such as anxiety, obsessional acts and thoughts and depression disappear. Fear of fatness and body image issues are consequences of a disordered eating behaviour. Patients engaged in Mandometer treatment also re-learn social skills, and when they have recovered, the risk of developing an eating disorder again is minimal.

Eating disorder patients in New Zealand as in many other parts of the world suffer because anorexia and bulimia are thought of as chronic disorders; patients

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may experience brief episodes of remission but these are interrupted by frequent periods of relapse. And so eating disorder patients have had a bleak prognosis. With Mandometer treatment patient have a chance of a complete recovery.

Mandometer is presently adapted for treating disordered eating associated with overweight and obesity and evidence that obese people can learn normal eating habits will be presented. When obese people learn to eat, they experience a substantial reduction of body weight.

Dr Cecilia Bergh and Professor Per Södersten, Section of Applied Neuroendocrinology, Karolinska Institute and AB Mando Stockholm who developed the programme, and Diane Rennard, Accredited Dietitian and Nutritionist of the Mandometer Clinic in Melbourne, will present the Mandometer Treatment. A patient in remission will describe the treatment in her own words. Mandy Beverly, Auckland, will speak about eating disorders from a parent perspective. Melanie Ward, BA, Mandometer Clinic Melbourne will present data on medical spending and savings for the treatment of eating disorders and obesity. Dr Anne O'Reilly, an Auckland based GP will chair the meeting.

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