
Self-reported symptoms of adult attention deficit hyperactivity disorder among obese patients seeking bariatric surgery and its relation to alcohol consumption, disordered eating and gender.

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Summary

What is already known about this subject

Symptoms of adult attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are common among people with obesity.

Symptoms of ADHD are associated with other impulsive behaviours.

Impulsivity can manifest differently in women and men.

What this study adds

The prevalence of ADHD symptoms was equal in both sexes in this patient group.

ADHD symptoms were associated with hazardous alcohol consumption in men but not in women. It may be important to investigate several comorbid conditions simultaneously instead of a single diagnosis.

Eating disorders and adult attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), both characterized by deficits in impulse control, are common among bariatric surgery patients. Previous studies in other groups have found gender differences in how symptoms of ADHD and eating disorders manifest as women show more disordered eating and men show more risk consumption of alcohol. In the present study, the association between symptoms of adult ADHD, eating disorders and hazardous alcohol consumption was investigated, while considering gender differences. Self-report questionnaires were obtained from 276 bariatric surgery patients 3–6 months before surgery. The prevalence rates of adult ADHD and binge eating disorder (BED) were 8.6% and 6.3%, respectively, with no evidence of gender difference in the prevalence rates. Hazardous alcohol consumption was reported by a significantly larger portion of men (16.9%) than women (8.6%). There was an association between adult ADHD and both BED and hazardous alcohol consumption. However, symptoms of adult ADHD were associated with hazardous alcohol

consumption in men but not in women. Our results suggest gender differences in hazardous alcohol consumption and self-reported symptoms of disordered eating despite similar prevalence rate of BED, but no gender difference in symptoms of adult ADHD. Finally, as the associations between these variables seem to be different in women and men, future studies need to investigate potential gender-specific functional and temporal relations between these variables.