HARM REDUCTION APPROACHES FOR A PATIENT WITH ANOREXIA NERVOSA

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Background. The correlation between anorexia nervosa and substance use disorder can be well characterized with the psychopathological analogs. Harm reduction approaches for substance use disorder have been accepted successfully, while those for anorexia nervosa haven’t been established enough yet. Since we experienced a treatment with harm reduction approaches for anorexia nervosa, we’ll report it.

Case description. Ms A is 28 years old, 161cm tall, 39kg in weight (BMI 15.0). She was diagnosed with anorexia nervosa binge-eating/purging type. We’ve introduced harm reduction approaches that don’t compel patients to regain weight as we don’t recommend alcoholics to be abstinent at first. We’ve supported her to handle with her difficulties for three years. She has gradually accepted her appropriate weight with her own will.

Suggestions. This case may suggest the availability of harm reduction approaches for anorexia nervosa. It could be useful to set an interim goal which let patients keep their weight not as low as fatal. In addition, the interim goal has to be followed by the real goals which aim to not only regain weight but also strengthen their self-esteem. Harm reduction approaches may reinforce the self determination that contributes to the recovery from anorexia nervosa.