

FOOD SUPPLEMENTS AND DCA

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Introduction

The aim was that of testing the usefulness of protein-based low-cal supplements in the management of eating disorders.

Materials and methods

10 women who suffered from eating disorders were selected within an age range of 20-40). A normal-calorie diet had been prescribed to them associated with sweet protein supplements and phytoextracts with tonic properties. The study went on for 6 months and involved anthropometric evaluation every two months as well as the validated tests BUT, EAT and SCL aimed at establishing the state of the pathology.

Results

Regarding the physical aspect, it was observed that there was an increase in the muscular mass and the elimination of the 'freezing' effect. There was also an improvement in the state of nails and hair, both of which became less fragile, and also a reduction in the manifestation of dermatitis. As for the eating habits, we observed a gradual return to a normal conduct with a reduction in such obsessive behaviour as weighing food, eating without dressing or seasoning food, having very small helpings, skipping meals and the like. In connection with the emotional sphere, we saw an improvement in the mood with disappearance of fits of depression and aggressive behaviour and a reduction in recurring thoughts about food which often led to plan meals in great detail and to moments of crisis if these plans were altered. As far as pharmacological aspects are concerned, about 50% of patients reduced their antidepressant therapy.

Conclusions

At the moment, it does not seem sensible to draw any positive conclusions about the total recovery from these conditions but, in any case, relevant changes were noticed in the patients by the doctor and the patients and also by the patients' relatives. It may be hypothesized that the use of sweet, low-cal protein supplements which give a sense of satiety makes it possible to overcome such symptoms as obsessive/compulsive thinking such as "I would like to eat that but I can't" or "I have eaten that but I wish I hadn't".