

Static and Dynamic Body Image in Bulimia Nervosa: Mental Representation of Body Dimensions and Biological Motion Patterns.

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The aim of the present study was to find out whether in bulimia nervosa the perceptual component of a disturbed body image is restricted to the overestimation of one's own body dimensions (static body image) or can be extended to a misperception of one's own motion patterns (dynamic body image). Method: Participants with bulimia nervosa (n = 30) and normal controls (n = 55) estimated their body dimensions by means of a photo distortion technique and their walking patterns using a biological motion distortion device. Results: Not only did participants with bulimia nervosa overestimate their own body dimensions, but also they perceived their own motion patterns corresponding to a higher BMI than did controls. Static body image was correlated with shape/ weight concerns and drive for thinness, whereas dynamic body image was associated with social insecurity and body image avoidance. Conclusion: In bulimia nervosa, body image disturbances can be extended to a dynamic component.