

# Effects of an outpatient sport-therapy programme on patients with eating disorders

<b>Submission date</b> 05/01/2015	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 26/01/2015	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 28/05/2024	<b>Condition category</b> Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

About 30–40% of patients with eating disorders (anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa) over exercise. Excessive exercising is associated with a worsening of eating disorders. However, in some patients physical activity helps to reduce body dissatisfaction and eating disorder symptoms. Only a few programmes have been developed that specifically address or use physical activity in eating disorders. How eating disorders and physical exercise affect each other is not sufficiently understood. Our aim is to assess the effects of an exercise-therapy programme on patients with eating disorders. Also, we aim to investigate the relation between physical activity and eating disorders.

### Who can participate?

Patients with eating disorders and a body-mass index greater than 16 kg/m<sup>2</sup> who exercise too much

### What does the study involve?

Patients will be randomly allocated to a newly developed manualised sport-therapy programme or a waiting list control group. Patients in the sport-therapy programme will have one introductory meeting and 12 weekly group sessions. Each session will last 120 minutes and will start with a short exchange about how everyone feels, followed by a warm-up and an introduction to the topic of the week (educational component). The main part (45–60 minutes) contains physical activity and sport plays. The session closes with a reflection round and the prescription of homework, depending on the topic. The educational component of the programme focuses on healthy and unhealthy aspects of physical activity. Patients in the intervention group will be assessed before the start of the intervention, 3 months later, at 6 months after the end of intervention. Patients in the waiting list control group will be assessed before the start of the intervention and 3 months later.

### What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The benefits are reductions in body dissatisfaction and eating disorder symptoms

Where is the study run from?

Department of Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy, University Medical Center  
(Germany)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

From March 2015 to August 2017

Who is funding the study?

Schweizerische Anorexia nervosa Stiftung (Switzerland)

Who is the main contact?

Professor Almut Zeeck

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## Contact information

### Type(s)

Scientific

### Contact name

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## Additional identifiers

### Protocol serial number

37-14

## Study information

### Scientific Title

Effects of the Freiburg sport-therapy programme on patients with eating disorders: a randomised study

### Study objectives

1. Pathological attitudes towards physical activity and pathological sport behavior will be significantly more reduced with the Freiburg sport-therapy intervention than spontaneous reductions in a control group (at the end of the intervention and at 6-months' follow-up)
2. Overall eating disorder will be significantly more reduced with the sport therapy intervention than spontaneous reductions or reductions with additional psychotherapy in the control group (at the end of the intervention and at 6-months' follow-up)

## **Ethics approval required**

Old ethics approval format

## **Ethics approval(s)**

Ethics committee of the University of Freiburg/Germany, 18 February 2013, number 65/13

## **Study design**

Interventional, randomised controlled study at a single centre.

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Study type(s)**

Treatment

## **Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Outpatients with eating disorders (anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa; body-mass index  $>16 \text{ kg/m}^2$  to  $< 25 \text{ kg/m}^2$ ) and unhealthy exercise behaviour.

## **Interventions**

A newly developed manualised sport-therapy programme (13-weekly group sessions; see Schlegel, et al, Psychother Psychosom Med Psychol 2012; <http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/database/169270/>) will be compared with a waiting list control group.

Patients will have one introductory meeting and 12 weekly group sessions. Each session will last 120 minutes and will start with a short exchange about how everyone feels, followed by a warm-up and an introduction to the topic of the week (educational component). The main part (45–60 minutes) contains physical activity and sport plays. The session closes with a reflection round and the prescription of homework, depending on the topic. The programme consists of five modules:

1. Module A is on becoming acquainted with the group
2. Module B is on education, self-monitoring and fostering the perception of one's own body
3. Module C is on working on changing attitudes towards sports and sports behaviour (e.g., focusing on achievement orientation, perception of boundaries, reflecting aims related to exercising, balancing effort and recovery)
4. Module D focuses on playful and new experiences with different types of sports (especially team sports like volleyball or sports with a social component like dancing)
5. Module E is on a final reflection on the group experiences and plans for the future.

The educational component of the programme focuses on healthy and unhealthy aspects of physical activity.

Patients in the intervention group will have measurements done before the start of the intervention, 3 months later (at the end of the intervention), at 6 months after the end of intervention (follow-up).

The waiting list control group will be assessed before the start of the intervention and 3 months later.

## **Intervention Type**

Behavioural

**Primary outcome(s)**

Reduction in pathological exercising (Commitment to Exercise Scale total score)

**Key secondary outcome(s)**

Reduction in overall eating disorder (total Score Eating Disorder Examination)

**Completion date**

31/08/2017

## Eligibility

**Key inclusion criteria**

1. Outpatients with a diagnosis of anorexia nervosa (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition)
2. Outpatients with a diagnosis of bulimia nervosa (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition)
3. Age at least 18 years old
4. Commitment to Exercise Scale total score >100
5. Body-mass index greater than 16 kg/m<sup>2</sup>

**Participant type(s)**

Patient

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Adult

**Lower age limit**

18 years

**Sex**

All

**Total final enrolment**

26

**Key exclusion criteria**

1. Professional athletes
2. People waiting for an inpatient admission
3. Psychosis, substance dependency or organic brain disease
4. Patients with physical problems that do not allow them to participate in physical activities

**Date of first enrolment**

01/03/2015

**Date of final enrolment**

01/08/2016

# Locations

## Countries of recruitment

Germany

## Study participating centre

Department of Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy, University Medical Center

Hauptstrasse 8

Freiburg

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79104

# Sponsor information

## Organisation

University Medical Center Freiburg

## ROR

<https://ror.org/03vzbgh69>

# Funder(s)

## Funder type

Not defined

## Funder Name

Schweizerische Anorexia nervosa Stiftung, Switzerland

# Results and Publications

## Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

## IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

## Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Results article</a>	results	07/07/2020	13/07/2020	Yes	No

[Other publications](#)

08/11/2019

28/05/2024

Yes

No