

The Effects of Bulimia Nervosa on Salivary Chemistry and Glands

Alireza Tamizifar¹

Bulimia Nervosa (BN) is a psychological pathological compulsive eating disorder found in both genders, 90 percent to 95 percent of documented cases have occurred in females. The impact on the oral cavity by the dysfunctional bingeing habits depends primarily on the cariogenic nature of the diet, plus the duration and frequency of bingeing and purging. In chronic cases as the regurgitated gastric contents are highly acidic, loss of the enamel can expose underlying dentine resulting in contact and thermal sensitivity and can predispose the teeth to dental caries.

Enlargement of the parotid and occasionally the submandibular salivary glands also detected in patients with bulimia nervosa.

A significant enhance in acinar size and number of secretory granules, fatty infiltration and fibrosis have been observed. The etiology for the glandular enlargement has not been defined.

The fluid-electrolyte disturbances of hypokalemia, hypochloremia and hypomagnesaemia have been tightly associated with frequent purging.

Our review study has found two to four times greater serum amylase after a monitored period of bingeing and vomiting in bulimics. We also found significantly lower chloride and potassium and slightly higher bicarbonate ion values. We could not determine whether bingeing or purging caused the elevated serum amylase or enlargement of the salivary glands. We found no significant difference in the level of salivary amylase between patients with bulimia and normal controls for parotid and submandibular secretions.

Key words: Bulimia Nervosa (BN), Binge & Purge

¹-Student of dental faculty of Tehran University