

Title: Instagram and Eating Disorders: An Internet survey

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Introduction: Anorexia nervosa (AN) is an eating disorder (ED) with a multi-factorial etiopathogenesis [1]. Data from the scientific literature have shown that exposure to social media may be associated with the development of ED [2] [3]. The objective of this study was to assess the frequency of subjects with ED, among Instagram users browsing or searching for pages or hashtags related to diet or body image.

Material and methods: We carried out a French prospective study using an anonymous Internet survey on Instagram. We collected socio demographical data, the terms of use and the subjective impact of Instagram on eating behaviours. We assessed the presence of an Eating Disorder with the Eating Disorders Inventory-II (EDI-II) questionnaire.

Results: 193 French people took part in this study. The average age was 23.9 ± 3.3 years old, with 191 (99.0%) women. In our sample of users, 131 (68%) subjects used Instagram more than one hour per day. 91 subjects (47.2%) said that the content of Instagram posts changed their eating habits and 134 subjects (69.4%) of the sample said that the content of Instagram posts changed the perception they had of their body. 111 subjects (57.5%) had EDI-II scores > 48 , indicating the presence of ED. The EDI-II mean score was $87,5 \pm 32,5$ in the group of subjects with ED. The average BMI were $21 \pm 2,7$ kg/m² in the group of subjects with ED.

Conclusion: This study found a large rate of ED subjects among Instagram users exposed to food and body image accounts or hashtags. The scores obtained on the subscales were similar to those of anorexia subjects found in previous studies [4]. The use of this social network constitutes a new element to be taken into account in the management of subjects suffering from ED, more particularly anorexia nervosa.

Keywords: Anorexia Nervosa, Eating Disorder, social networks, media, Instagram

Conflicts interests: A. Dervaux has received honoraria for lectures and non-financial support from Camurus, Indivior, Janssen, Otsuka, and Lundbeck, outside the submitted work.

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