

**Anke Diezemann, Psychobiological alterations in anorexia and bulimia nervosa,  
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Changes in the cardiovascular system are an often described state in eating disorders.

Women with anorexia and bulimia nervosa and control persons were studied before and after a treatment in a psychosomatic clinic. Using different methods cardiovascular reactivity was evaluated in rest and during mental stress and exercise. Improvements after treatment were defined by weight gain, an increase of the triiodothyronine level and no more purging in the last three weeks.

The anorectics showed higher epinephrine levels than the other women. The cardiovascular parameters demonstrated an increase of parasympathetic activity and a decrease of sympathetic activity in eating disorders. However, the reactivities on stressors showed no differences in comparison to the control group. No changes were observed during the treatment apart from the heart rate, which showed a tendency to increase in the last week of therapy.

Because the improvements during the therapy were generally small, within the present study it could not be clarified whether the observed alterations are reversible. An increase of the parasympathetic activity in autonomic regulation of the heart in eating disorders has been demonstrated and the reactivity on stressors appears to be normal.