

Publication

5-HTTLPR moderates the relation between changes in depressive and bulimic symptoms in adolescent girls : a longitudinal study

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Author(s) Mata, Jutta; Gotlib, Ian H

Author(s) at UniBasel [Wittig Mata, Jutta](#) ;

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Objective: Depression and bulimia both are associated with low serotonin levels. We examined whether the serotonin transporter gene (5-HTTLPR) moderates the relation between depressive and bulimic symptoms over time. Method: Fifty adolescent girls with no current or past Axis I disorder were genotyped for the 5-HTTLPR gene. Twice, 6 months apart, participants completed self-report measures of depressive symptoms and bulimic symptoms. Results: The association between change in depressive symptoms and change in bulimic symptoms over time was significantly stronger in girls who are homozygous for the short 5-HTTLPR allele than for girls with at least one long allele. Discussion: This finding is consistent with previous studies documenting a relation between depressive and bulimic symptoms in adolescents. Few studies, however, considered the possible role of serotonin linking both disorders. Gaining a better understanding of developmental effects of low serotonin could help to identify high-risk individuals and provide effective prevention and intervention. (C) 2010 by Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

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