

EATING BEHAVIORS, ORTHOREXIA, SELF-ESTEEM, AND LIFE SATISFACTION IN INDIVIDUALS WITH CELIAC DISEASE

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BACKGROUND AND AIM: Celiac disease (CD) is an autoimmune disease that develops as a result of sensitivity to gluten and generally progresses with absorption problems. Patients must follow a strict gluten-free diet for life. In this study, we aimed to compare the eating behaviors, orthorexia, self-esteem and life satisfaction of individuals with CD with healthy controls (HC).

METHODS: This cross-sectional study included 387 individuals with CD and 402 HC. All participants completed Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire-Short Form (EDE-Q-13), Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-40), Ortho-15 Test (O-15), Self-Esteem Evaluation Scale-Short Form (SERS-SF), and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). Ethical approval was obtained on 02.01.2025 with decision number TBAEK-44.

RESULTS: The mean age was similar between individuals with CD (30.13±8.92 years) and HC (29.57±10.30 years) (p=0.068). Among individuals with CD, 94.8% were female, compared to 91.8% in the HC group (p=0.088). Individuals with CD had significantly lower scores in O-15 (p<0.001), EDE-Q-13 weight concern (p=0.006), EDE-Q-13 restrained eating (p=0.029), O-15 emotional eating (p<0.001), and SWLS (p=0.009),

whereas their EAT-40 (p=0.002) and positive SERS-SF scores (p=0.002) were significantly higher. Correlation analysis showed that as the duration of CD diagnosis increased, O-15 scores (r=-0.184, p<0.001) and negative SERS-SF scores (r=-0.115, p=0.023) significantly decreased. Regression analysis indicated that CD was associated with SWLS (OR=1.062, 95% CI: 1.023-1.102, p=0.001), positive SERS-SF (OR=0.982, 95% CI: 0.968-0.996, p=0.011), and O-15 emotional eating (OR=1.336, 95% CI: 1.129-1.581, p<0.001).

CONCLUSIONS: Our findings suggest that individuals with CD have a higher risk of orthorexia and experience difficulties in certain eating behaviors. Previous studies have also reported that orthorexia is a significant concern among individuals with CD. Additionally, issues related to quality of life and self-esteem have been documented in this population. In line with the existing literature, our study found lower life satisfaction and self-esteem in individuals with CD.

Keywords: Celiac disease, eating attitudes, life satisfaction, orthorexia, self-esteem