

A case study of pica disorder

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Abstract

This article presents a case study of pica disorder.

The patient shows difficulties in his functionality, difficulties affect his daily functionality because with the consumption on inedible substances, he risks his life. Also the patient have difficulties understanding verbal aburties also his memory has failed he can't make the difference between two same objects. In different social situations he can't answer for his age. Regarding the treatment, we must first differentiate if it is happening as a reaction to a stressful event or any emotional discomfort that is happening to the child. We must evaluate if the child is seeing it as a compensatory action of oral pleasures. The purpose of treatment is to stop inappropriate behavior.

Keywords: Pica Disorder; Eating Disorder; Intellectual Disability; Inappropriate Behavior; Development disability.

1. Introduction

Pica is an eating disorder in which people eat inedible things, such as soil, pieces of paper, paint, etc. The term 'pica' refers to the distortion of flavors. Pica disorder can occur in children and adults with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities, in children affected by the autistic spectrum, but it can also occur in children who have normal development. Pica disorder can cause many medical problems such as intestinal problems (such as constipation or diarrhea), poisoning from various substances consumed, dental problems, stomach problems, etc. Also, this disorder causes many emotional discomforts as well. DSM-5(2013) [2].

According to DSM-V Pica Disorder:

- It is an eating disorder
- It should continue for more than a month
- Eating such (inedible) objects is considered inappropriate for the child's chronological development
- Avoidance of these foods requires great medical attention (which can lead to surgical emergencies)
- Eating these substances is not explained by a cultural practice in the social context of the individual. DSM-5 (2013)[2]
- In cases where children are affected by autism, mental retardation, schizophrenia, the consumption of these substances is not attributed to the pica disorder, but to the state of the disorder in which the child is found. DSMIV -TR (2002) [1]

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2. Patient Identification

Antonio is 9 years old, referred for evaluation, because a month ago the patient was involved in eating inedible substances. This episode had been happening for a month. The child's mother had brought both the slippers and the scissors, which were torn from all sides, to the pediatrician's and psychologist's office. She reported that the child himself had told her about this fact. The child also showed many problems in the field of communication, he could not articulate some of the letters such as: r;b;v, which is not common for the patient's age. Kaplan (2002)[3]

During the general psychological assessment, it was noted that Antonio does not meet the normal parameters of development. Difficulties are observed in the cognitive sphere, he is not coherent during the conversation and cannot answer hypothetical questions DSMIV –TR (2002).[1] Difficulties in socializing are also noted; he has no close friends and has a tough time adapting to new situations. Difficulties in the development of fine motor skills are also observed. Antonio holds the pencil with both hands.

Antonio lives with his mother, father and 15-year-old sister who is diagnosed with developmental delay, he spends most of his time with her, as his parents work long hours. The patient's mother reports that the problems in the developmental and communication aspects started a year ago, until then his development has been normal, she claims. Antonio has difficulties understanding verbal absurdities also his memory has failed he can't make the difference between two same objects. In different social situations he can't answer for his age according DSM-V the patient has intellectual disability.

3. Treatment Plan

Regarding the treatment, we must first differentiate if it is happening as a reaction to a stressful event or any emotional discomfort that is happening to the child. We must evaluate if the child is seeing it as a compensatory action of oral pleasures.

The patient was treated with classical behavioral techniques

3.1. Technique

Stopping Inappropriate Behavior, Krumboltz and Thoresen (1976) [5]

3.2. Purpose of counseling

To stop inappropriate behavior

- Description of the principle of extinction: Extinction in this case has to do with the elimination of an unpleasant consequence resulting in a response, it serves to stop someone from acting in an undesirable way, as well as trying to make that person not to be rewarded for an unwanted behavior Krumboltz, J. D., & Thoresen C. E. (1969). [4]
- Description of the principle of an alternative behavior; the principle for the elimination of unwanted behavior includes the reward for an alternative action that is incompatible or cannot occur at the same time as the unwanted action.
- Description of the Satiation principle; To diminish a behavior, you must let the kid to continue (or insist that he continue) performing the unpleasant action until he becomes weary of it.

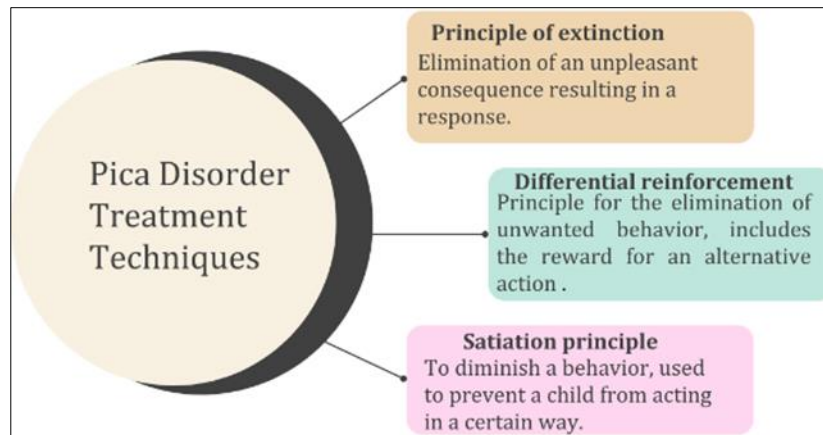


Figure 1 Purpose of counseling

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the case study that has been provided clarifies the complex nature of Pica disorder and its significant effects on a person's physical and mental health. After reviewing the case, a number of important conclusions and insights become clear. Given the variety of symptoms associated with Pica disease, the diagnostic procedure made clear the inherent difficulties in making an identification. This emphasizes how vital comprehensive evaluations and teamwork among medical practitioners are. The importance of family and social support cannot be understated. Engaging the family in the therapy process, offering knowledge on Pica disorder, and creating a supportive atmosphere are critical for the individual's rehabilitation and long-term well-being.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from the parents.

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