

ORAL PRESENTATION

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# The sequential binge: a new therapeutic approach for binge eating

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From 2015 ANZAED Conference: Riding the Waves to Recovery  
Surfers Paradise, Australia. 21-22 August 2015

## Introduction

A significant proportion of eating disorder patients experiencing binge eating do not respond to cognitive behavioral therapies (CBT). Here, we present a new behavioral technique, the sequential binge (SB) that aims at reducing both food intake during binges and daily binge numbers. Specifically, SB replaces the usual pattern of food ingestion during a binge by a repeated monotonous food ingestion sequence interspersed with short incremental pauses. This pattern of ingestion is hypothesised to facilitate boredom towards the ingested foods and promote a sense of control over binge foods.

## Methods

15 eating disorder in-patients with refractory binge eating who were non-responsive to intensive CBT were given SB as an adjunct to their treatment. Patients were followed up for 16 weeks after SB implementation.

## Results

Compared to regular binges, SB was associated with a 44% relative reduction in the planned food intake during binges ( $p < 0.001$ ), a longer refractory period after the binge (median: 48hrs vs. 4hrs,  $p = 0.002$ ), and an average relative reduction of binges by 26% the day after SB ( $p = 0.004$ ).

## Conclusion

This case series shows promising evidence for the use of SB in patients with refractory binge eating. Further evaluation of the use of SB for refractory binge eating in a prospective double-blind clinical study seems justified.

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Published: 23 November 2015

doi:10.1186/2050-2974-3-S1-O57

Cite this article as: Neveu et al.: The sequential binge: a new therapeutic approach for binge eating. *Journal of Eating Disorders* 2015 **3** (Suppl 1):O57.

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