

## PR2.F – Case Study

### Anorexia nervosa

#### Description of the Case Study

A mother of twins, two 16-year-old boys, contacted her family doctor as she was concerned about one of her sons. Both boys are 180 cm tall. However, the younger twin weighs 66 kg, whereas the older twin weighs 50 kg. The older twin, as reported by their mother, feels disgust towards food, and has reduced his diet to crisps and chocolate. The younger twin has a varied diet, and eats all daily meals, and in a satisfactory amount. The older twin keeps making comments about how his brother will become fat if he continues to eat all types of food. Additionally, his mother reported the older twin getting tired quickly, losing muscle mass, and having joint aches, particularly ankles and knees.

The family doctor examined both boys, and found that other than the weight of the older twin, everything else was in normal range values at the time of the exam. However, as the older twin's BMI was 15.4, and based on his mother's concerns, he was referred to a team of specialists who deal with EDs.

#### Questions

1. What type of training would you recommend to this patient/the older twin? Would you recommend cardio (endurance) training? Why, or why not? Would you recommend resistance training, e.g. stretching? Why, or why not?
2. Do you think exercise therapy is the correct approach for patients suffering from anorexia nervosa? Why, or why not?
3. In what conditions would exercise therapy be acceptable for a patient like the one in the case study?



**Feedback:**

**Question 1:** The recommended type of training for this patient would include resistance training i.e., light stretching. Cardio (endurance) training could seriously threaten the patients health (even lead to a fatal outcome), e.g., through sweating the patients electrolyte levels could suddenly plummet.

**Question 2 & Question 3:** Exercise therapy should be applied in patients suffering from anorexia nervosa only in strictly controlled conditions, i.e., with constant monitoring of the patient's vitals .

