

EATING DISORDERS RESEARCH

Contact: Mae Sokol, M.D. (955-6190)

When to contact: One month prior or sooner

Preceptor: Mae Sokol, M.D.

Where to meet: Eating Disorders Program (Children's Hospital)

Length of rotation: 1 month or longer

Purpose:

This experience will prepare the resident to do research on eating disordered children and adolescents who may have infection-triggered Anorexia Nervosa. The resident will also learn about research methodology and critical evaluation of the scientific literature.

Objectives:

1. The resident will learn to evaluate eating disordered patients to determine which ones have possible infection-triggered symptoms.
2. The resident will learn about the current understanding of the assessment and treatment of Pediatric Auto-immune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcus (PANDAS).
3. The resident will learn about research methodology, critical evaluation of the scientific literature and how to work as part of a research team.

Recent evidence suggests that transmissible agents may cause or contribute to some psychiatric illnesses. The idea that psychiatric disorders and infectious disease are related is not new. Neurosyphilis was often treated as a mental disorder, until the 1940s, when it was found that penicillin could treat the causative spirochete, *Treponema pallidum*. Peptic ulcers were believed to be caused by stress and spicy food, until the 1980s, when it was found that most ulcers are caused by infection with *Helicobacter pylori*, and can be treated with antibiotics.

The purpose of the project the trainee will be working on is to study the possibility of an infection-triggered type of Anorexia Nervosa [AN], which may be one of the Pediatric Auto-immune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcus [PANDAS]. The clinical characteristics of all new AN patients in the Children's Hospital Eating Disorders Program (CH EDP), who are 7 to 18 years old, will be evaluated in this study. Those who have PANDAS characteristics will be study subjects. Those who do not have these characteristics will be control subjects. This study will define the characteristics of a subtype of AN, with a specific etiology: PANDAS AN. This study will compare the group of PANDAS AN patients to all non-PANDAS AN patients, and to matched controls

The trainee will participate in collecting, managing and evaluating the study subjects' demographic characteristics, psychological, medical and infectious disease symptoms, clinical assessment scores, and laboratory values. The trainee will learn to administer clinical assessments. The trainee will also participate in data analysis and literature review. The trainee is encouraged to also participate in preparing manuscripts based on the data collected.

Terminal objectives:

1. The resident will gain a greater understanding the literature on PANDAS.
2. The resident gain a greater understanding of research methodology and working on a research team.
3. The resident will participate in collecting scientific data and/or the writing of a paper about this infection-triggered eating disorders.

Enabling methods/opportunities:

This rotation offers the opportunity to participate in a research project. The resident will have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the research project, choosing the aspects that he/she prefers to focus on during this rotation.

1. The resident is expected to administer research assessments, evaluate the study subjects' demographic, psychological, medical and infectious disease symptoms, as well as analyze data and review the literature. Workload will be negotiated on an individual basis.
2. If interested, the resident has the opportunity to participate in writing a paper during the rotation (this is optional).
3. The resident can participate in other aspects of clinical research in the Eating Disorders Program during this rotation.