

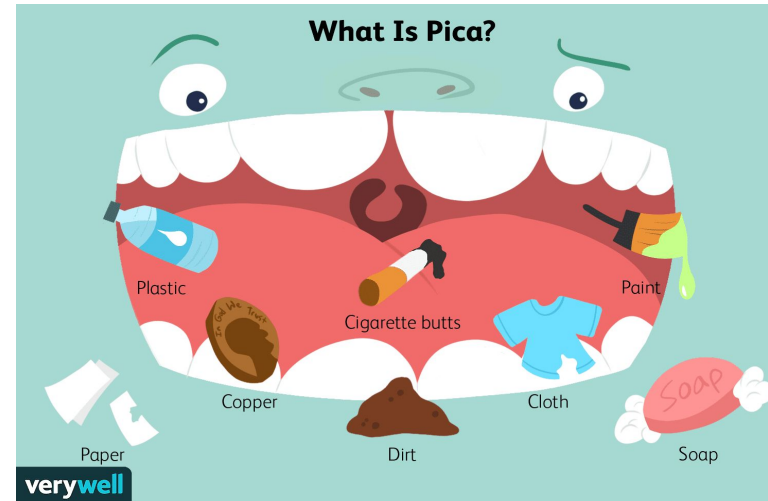


PICA

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What is Pica?

- Compulsive eating disorder in which people eat non-food items
 - ◆ Common - ice, dirt, clay, flaking paint,
 - ◆ Less Common - glue, hair, cigarette ashes, feces
- Pica can have causes that aren't due to underlying disease
 - ◆ Stress
 - ◆ Cultural factors
 - ◆ Nutritional deficiencies
 - ◆ Pregnancy
- More common in children, but can also occur in adults
 - ◆ Affects 10%-30% of children ages 1 to 6
- Associated with some types of intellectual and developmental disabilities, such as autism spectrum disorder



Diagnosis

- Before making diagnosis, the doctor evaluates the presence of other disorders
 - ◆ Intellectual disabilities
 - ◆ Developmental disabilities
 - ◆ Obsessive compulsive disorder
- If Pica is suspected, a medical evaluation is important to check for intestinal blockages in the intestinal tract
- The criteria for pica under DSM-5 is as follows:
 - ◆ Persistent eating of non-nutritive, nonfood substances for a period of at least one month.
 - ◆ The eating of nonnutritive, nonfood substances is inappropriate to the developmental level of the individual.
 - ◆ The eating behavior is not part of a culturally supported or socially normative practice.
 - ◆ If occurring with another mental disorder, or during a medical condition, it is severe enough to warrant independent clinical attention.



Etiology & Pathophysiology

- No direct casualty has been established although there are many implicated risk factors
- Associations were found between Pica and:
 - cultural factors,
 - learned behaviors,
 - low socioeconomic status,
 - underlying mental health issues,
 - child neglect,
 - abuse,
 - pregnancy,
 - nutritional deficiency.



- In a study on Geophagia(Soil consumption) researchers proposed that the non-nutritive substances offer protection from harmful toxins during the most vulnerable stages of human cell replication and embryogenesis.
- Mechanism of protection:
 - Substances binding to toxins thereby decreasing their intestinal absorption
- In a study on Pagophagia(compulsive ice chewing) researchers hypothesized that when an anemic patient chews on ice it increases perfusion(blood flow to the brain) which improves brain function (Al Nasser et al). (Hunt et al.)

Pica recovery

- Pica recovery programs usually assist in anemia recovery
- Most people with pica often say that their symptoms last for a few months, but some can stay up to years
- Recovery can be harder and longer for people with learning disabilities and on the Autism spectrum disorder
- People who are pregnant or anemic tend to have a faster recovery

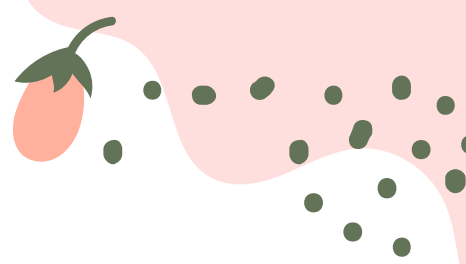


The media's take on Pica

Woman Eats More Than 100 Bars Of Soap Every Year | My Strange

Addiction

1000 ways to die



Video Review


- My strange addiction: follows Tempest and her addiction to soap and detergent when she is stressed.
 - Camera focused on her eating soap rather than discussing the problem.
 - Used music, sound effects and cuts to make something serious more dramatic.
 - Did not address it as pica.
- 1000 ways to die: follows a french man who would eat coins.
 - Used music, cuts and a dramatic recreation of his condition.
 - Scare tactic and dehumanization: saying there was no cure except death, "even the dog isn't safe".
 - Addresses pica, but was still uncommon and unknown at the time.



Case Study



Veena:

- 14 year old girl from a small village in India who ate mud.
 - Had thoughts of eating mud since the age of 4 years old.
 - Showed no signs of underlying disease or autism spectrum disorder.
 - Believed OCD had encouraged this behavior through her adolescence.
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Singh (2013).

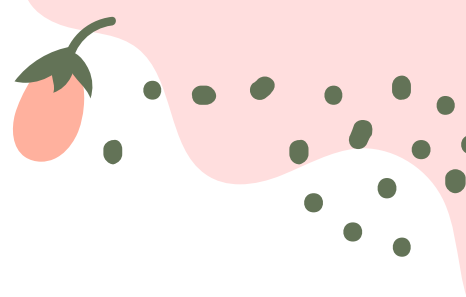
Case Series:

- 3 patients with pica
 - 36 year old caucasian woman with dysfunctional uterine bleeding. High intake of ice everyday.
 - 62 year old caucasian man with colonic polyps and excessive bleeding. Consumed partially frozen bottled water.
 - 37 year old hispanic woman chewed on rubber bands and diagnosed with dysfunctional uterine bleeding.

Khan, Y. & Tisman, G. (2010).

Content Questions

- What are some of the common and less common non-food items individuals eat, and what are your thoughts on it?
- What are some risk factors for Pica? How is Pica treated?
- How do TV shows and media portray Pica? Share your own experience of how you've seen pica or other EDs displayed on media platforms (if any).



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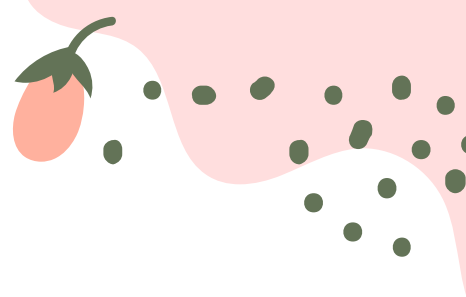
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