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ANOREXIA NERVOSA AND PREGNANCY: A CASE REPORT

L.C. Castro¹, S. Moreira², A. Lopes², M. Branco³

¹Department of Psychiatry, Hospital de Magalhães Lemos, ²Liaison Psychiatry Unit, ³Psychology/ Liaison Psychiatry Unit, Centro Hospitalar do Porto/Hospital de Santo António, Porto, Portugal

Background: Several studies report that women with a history of eating disorders are at higher risk of pregnancy complications and major adverse perinatal outcomes.

Aim: To report a case of anorexia nervosa during pregnancy, in order to underline the impact of eating disorders on pregnancy.

Methods: Case study and review of the literature.

Results: A 32 year old woman was hospitalized in an obstetric service of a general hospital for high risk pregnancy complications. She maintained a disturbed eating behaviour, with periods of restrictive eating and bulimic-purging episodes. She was underweight, did not reach the recommended weight gain during pregnancy and showed intrauterine growth restriction. The Psychiatry Liaison Unit was asked to follow the case during the obstetric hospitalization.

Discussion: Pregnant women with eating disorders have higher risk of pregnancy and neonatal complications. Pregnancy is a privileged opportunity to maximize intervention in eating disorders, since women show higher levels of motivation for therapy. Some cases of anorexia nervosa may warrant special obstetric care to ensure adequate prenatal nutrition and fetal development. Since there are few studies on this topic and they report conflicting results, it is a relevant area for future research.