

# Plasma B12 levels tied to anorexia nervosa severity

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(HealthDay)—In patients with anorexia nervosa, plasma levels of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> might be an early marker of liver dysfunction and are possibly related to more severe psychopathological aspects, according to a study published in the April issue of the *International Journal of Eating Disorders*.

Fabiola Corbetta, M.D., from the University of Milano-Bicocca in Italy, recruited 70 restrictive type [anorexia nervosa](#) adolescents. The severity of psychopathological traits was assessed using the Eating Disorders Inventory-3 scale. Plasma levels of vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, folates, transaminases (AST, ALT), gamma-glutamyl transpeptidase (GGT), alkaline phosphatase (ALP), and cholinesterase (CHE) were assessed.

The researchers found that 38.5 percent of patients showed vitamin B<sub>12</sub> values (H-B<sub>12</sub>) above the upper range of normal reference, 4.3 percent of patients had increased values of folates, 20 and 11.4 percent of patients, respectively, displayed ALT and AST values above reference limits, and none had GGT values above normal range. While low CHE and ALP values were seen in 55 and 20 percent of patients, respectively, a linear correlation with both transaminases was present only for vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and folates. Higher AST and ALT values were seen in H-B<sub>12</sub> patients. There was a significant correlation between Eating Disorders Inventory-3 subscores and vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and folates plasma values.

"The identification of patients with higher fasting plasma vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels could therefore lead to earlier and more careful refeeding interventions," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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