

# Increase in Adolescent Hospitalizations Related to Eating Disorders

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## Admissions Related to Eating Disorders

Hospitals have expressed concern that they are seeing an increase in hospitalization of adolescents with eating disorders during the pandemic.<sup>1</sup> To evaluate these concerns, we analyzed the rates of hospital admissions that included an eating disorder diagnosis and found that those increased by 25% overall for patients ages 12-18 as compared to predictions based on pre-pandemic trends. When looking at males versus females, females had a 30% increase in hospital admissions (1,326 admissions were predicted and 1,718 occurred). Admissions for males did not increase (199 admissions were predicted and 192 occurred).

### Hospital Admissions Related to Eating Disorders in Adolescents

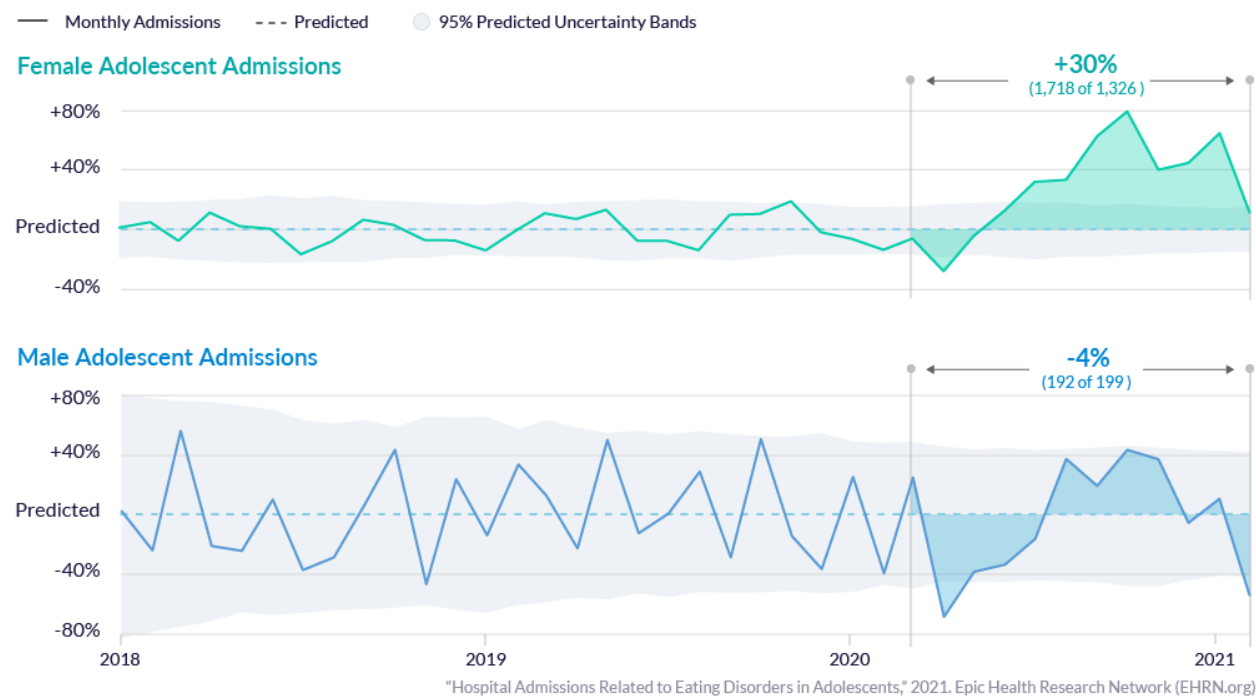


Figure 1: Hospital admissions for patients 12-18 years old from January 2018 through February 2021. The dashed line indicates the pre-pandemic trend. The green and blue shaded areas indicate the percent change from predicted.

## New Eating Disorder Diagnoses in Adolescents

We then examined whether the increase in hospital admissions was partly due to an overall increase in new diagnoses of eating disorders. We found that the total number of visits for a newly diagnosed eating disorder did not change during the pandemic; however, there was a considerable difference between males and females as shown in Figure 2. In females ages 12-18, eating disorder diagnoses increased by 15% compared to the predicted rate. In males of the same age, eating disorder diagnoses appears to have



Term	Definition
<b>Eating Disorder Diagnosis</b>	<p>Diagnoses categorized with an ICD-10-CM code of any of F50, F50.0, F50.00, F50.01, F50.02, F50.2, F50.8, F50.81, F50.82, F50.89, or F50.9.</p> <p>Within the diagnoses identified by those ICD codes, we excluded any that were tracking the condition in remission or these specific diagnoses deemed not pertinent: Hysterical vomiting; psychogenic vomiting; presence of nausea not specified, perverted appetite of nonorganic origin; appetite disorder; non-organic loss of appetite; psychogenic vomiting, nausea presence unspecified; unable to eat; nutritional deficiency due to eating disorder; feeding problem in infant, nonorganic; eating disorder in remission; abrasions and calluses on knuckles due to self-induced vomiting; geophagia; cyclical vomiting, psychogenic; pathologic ice eating; loss of appetite feeding disturbances of nonorganic origin; psychogenic vomiting; eating disorder complicating pregnancy, antepartum; alteration in nutrition processes as evidenced by pica; pica in adults; psychogenic cyclical vomiting; eating dirt; eating disorder affecting pregnancy, antepartum; feeding problem in elderly, nonorganic; psychogenic loss of appetite; psychogenic vomiting with nausea; non-organic infant feeding disturbance; pagophagia; infantile feeding disturbances of nonorganic origin; psychogenic vomiting without nausea; pica</p> <p><b>Diagnosis Setting:</b> Encounter Diagnosis, Billing Diagnosis</p> <p><b>Start Date:</b> Start date of the associated encounter</p>
<b>New Eating Disorder Diagnosis</b>	<p>The first instance of any Eating Disorder Diagnosis for a patient in the electronic health record.</p>
<b>Admission including an Eating Disorder Diagnosis</b>	<p>A hospital admission with an encounter or billing diagnosis for an eating disorder.</p>

## References

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3. Patton, J. New 'shadow pandemic': How COVID has contributed to a surge in eating disorders in young children. Global News. January 21, 2021. Accessed March 29, 2021. <https://globalnews.ca/news/7590626/coronavirus-covid-eating-disorders-young-people-sick-kids/>