

# **Callous-unemotional traits in conduct in relation to salivary cortisol level**

Thesis

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## **Abstract**

Emerging evidence suggests that low levels of cortisol may act as a biological marker for the Callous Unemotional Traits (CUI) subgroup of Conduct Disorder.

The current study tested the presence of items of CUI and the salivary cortisol level among group of patients with Conduct Disorder ( Forty patients from 12 to 16 years old , diagnosed according to criteria of DSM IV and recruited from Kasr El Aini Psychiatric hospital ) and group of control ( Forty healthy volunteers ) . Both groups were subjected to inventory of Callous Unemotional Traits and salivary samples were collected and assessed for cortisol level using DRG® Salivary Cortisol ELISA. Patient group showed high levels of CUI compared to control group . Patient group showed significant difference in salivary cortisol level ( mean is  $3.188 \pm 1.1108$  ) compared to control group ( mean is  $5.01 \pm 1.846$  ).This study found correlation between Callous traits and severity of Conduct Disorder.

The current findings build upon recent research in suggesting that low cortisol level may be a biological marker for patients with Conduct Disorder and high levels of CU traits.

**Keywords:** callous unemotional traits ; conduct disorder ; salivary cortisol ; disruptive disorder.