

Anorexia shows up at age 5

VICTORIAN girls as young as five are being treated for serious eating disorders.

Research has found 10,000 Australian girls aged from 14 to 17 have anorexia.

Dr Cecilia Bergh, who founded the eating disorder treatment method called Mandometer, said her Melbourne clinic was treating patients as young as 11.

"Every child with anorexia nervosa who presents for treatment is one child too many," Dr Bergh said.

ROBYN RILEY

She was in Melbourne this week to lobby federal and state governments and health insurance companies for funding.

In Sweden, the Mandometer Clinic is publicly funded.

Dr Bergh hopes to see the same support for eating disorder clinics here.

Melbourne doctors said they were not surprised many young girls were being treated for eating disorders.

Dr Rick Kausman, a director of The Butterfly Foundation, which supports Australians with

eating disorders, said governments needed to do more.

"The age group is getting younger," he said. "And we are seeing more young boys with eating disorders as well."

Dr Kausman said Victorian children were developing eating disorders earlier because of the perception that success was driven by physical appearance.

The youngest child he had treated was a five-year-old girl, believed to be the youngest Australian suffering anorexia.

**The Versace victim,
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