



Did you know?

Eating disorders are medical conditions; they are not a lifestyle choice.

Eating disorders require the care of a trained professional with knowledge of these disorders.

The most effective treatment involves:

- psychotherapy (counseling) with careful attention to medical and nutritional needs

Early diagnosis and intervention significantly enhance recovery.

Do you need help?

If so, talk with your doctor about treatment options. Together, you can set up a plan to help you improve.

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**Eating
Disorders**



al-sbirt

Eating Disorders

Eating disorders are serious mental health disorders that cause a person to have an unhealthy relationship with food. They involve major problems with thoughts about food and eating behaviors. A person with an eating disorder may eat much less or much more than needed.



About Eating Disorders

Most eating disorders involve focusing too much on weight, body shape, and food, leading to dangerous eating behaviors. These behaviors can significantly impact the body's ability to get proper nutrition.

Eating disorders can harm the heart, digestive system, bones, and teeth and mouth, and lead to other diseases.

Common Eating Disorders:

- **Anorexia Nervosa** – avoiding food, overly cutting back on food, or eating very small amounts of certain foods
- **Bulimia Nervosa** – periods of over-eating, forcing themselves to throw up, or they may use laxatives
- **Binge Eating Disorder** – Out-of-control eating; will keep eating even after they are full and very uncomfortable

What are the Warning Signs?

- Constantly thinking about weight, food, calories, dieting, and body image
- Exercising too much
- Discoloration or staining of teeth
- Evidence of purging behaviors: many trips to the bathroom, self-induced vomiting, periods of fasting or laxative, diet pill, or diuretic abuse.
- Withdrawal from usual friends and activities

Effects of Eating Disorders

Head

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Confusion

Mouth

- Excessive thirst
- Yellowing of teeth and cavities

Muscles

- Muscle wasting
- Loss or thinning of bone mass

Skin

- Cuts and Callouses
- Dry Skin
- Dry and brittle nails
- Yellowing skin
- Poor wound healing
- Brittle nails
- Thin hair on body and head

Stomach

- Bloating
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Gas

Other Feelings/Problems

- Depression and Anxiety
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feelings of guilt
- Distorted thought patterns
- Irregular emotions

Heart

- Fast heartbeat
- Heartburn

Lungs

- Reduction in lung tissue
- Shortness of breath
- May cause emphysema (a lung condition)

Who is at Risk:

Eating Disorders do not Discriminate!

- Anyone can develop an eating disorder regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, culture, size, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation.
- Eating disorders also impact the family, friends, and loved ones of the person with the disorder.