Types of Eating Disorders

There are three types of Eating Disorders. However, a person may have more than one type. Eating Disorders involve an obsession with food and a change in normal eating behavior. Eating Disorders are often a symptom of a bigger problem. Eating Disorders are dangerous — and can be fatal.

Anorexia nervosa: the constant pursuit of thinness
- Fears becoming fat
- Reports feeling fat even though very thin
- In females, periods are absent
- Fears gaining weight

Bulimia nervosa: the diet-binge-purge disorder
- Binge eats (eats excessive amounts)
- Feels out of control while eating
- Purges to get rid of calories (vomits, uses laxatives, exercises, or fasts)
- May be underweight, normal weight, or overweight

Binge Eating Disorder: compulsive eating
- Binge eats
- Feels out of control and unable to stop eating during binges
- May eat rapidly and secretly, or may snack and nibble all day long
- Tends to be depressed and overweight

How to Help Yourself

Recovering from Eating Disorders is possible!

Begin by:
Talking to your parents, teacher, health care provider, school nurse, or counselor. These people can help you find the right type of help.

Contact Oregon SafeNet for local counseling and treatment information.
1-800-SafeNet
1-800-723-3638

Putting things in proportion...

20 years ago, models weighed 8% less than the average woman. Today they weigh 23% less.

If shop mannequins were real women they’d be too thin to menstruate.

Marilyn Monroe wore a size 12.

The models in magazines are airbrushed — they’re not perfect!

How to Help Someone You Care About

The most important thing you can do is to convince the person to get help. Be ready for resistance.

Some things to do:
- Provide information.
- Be supportive and caring.
- Continue to suggest professional help. Don’t pester. Don’t give up!
- Realize that recovery is the person’s responsibility, not yours.

Some things to avoid:
- Avoid power struggles. Don’t try to control.
- Don’t nag, plead, or threaten.
- Don’t criticize or shame.
- Don’t say, “You are too thin.” This is what the person wants to hear.
- Don’t ignore stolen food and evidence of purging. Ask for responsibility.
- Don’t expect an instant recovery.
Are You at Risk?

Eating Disorders can be found in both males and females, people from every age group, race, and economic status. However, young women, ages 12-25, and student athletes (including wrestlers) seem to be at the greatest risk for eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia.

Check off the statements that are true for you:

- I worry about what I eat.
- Even though people tell me I’m thin, I feel fat.
- When I eat, I’m afraid I won’t be able to stop.
- I get anxious if I can’t exercise.
- I would rather eat by myself than with others.
- I vomit or take laxatives to control my weight.
- I have a secret stash of food.
- If I were thinner, I would like myself better.
- I feel guilty when I eat.
- I am hardly ever happy with myself.
- I lie about what I eat.
- Other people talk about the way I eat.
- I binge eat.

None of the above behaviors is normal or healthy. The more items you have checked, the more serious your problem may be.

Resources

Your Health Care Provider or Counselor can also provide you with some information on Eating Disorders.

Associations

ANRED - Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders, Inc. Provides excellent information on their website:

www.anred.com

CR-EDN - Columbia River Eating Disorder Network
Provides education and advocacy regarding treatment and prevention of eating disorders.

- Provides a list of treatment referral sources in the Portland/Vancouver area
- Co-sponsors a free, peer support group for persons recovering from an eating disorder
- Sponsors a training conference for professionals each February
- Provides support and resources for those with eating disorders as well as parents and spouses

Phone: (360) 546-9506
www.vancouver.wsu.edu/fac/irving/CR-EDN.htm

National Center for Overcoming Overeating
P.O. Box 1257; Old Chelsea Station; New York, NY 10113-0920. Phone: (212) 875-0442
www.overcomingovereating.com/centers.html

For more resources and information on eating disorders visit our website at: www.ohd.hr.state.or.us/ah

To request this material in an alternate format, please call 503-731-4021.

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