

INFORMATION SHEET: SIGNS OF BULIMIA AND ANOREXIA

An eating disorder is an illness that causes serious disturbances to your everyday diet, such as eating extremely small amounts of food or severely overeating. A person with an eating disorder may have started out just eating smaller or larger amounts of food, but at some point, the urge to eat less or more spiraled out of control. Severe distress or concern about body weight or shape may also characterize an eating disorder. Eating disorders frequently appear during the teen years or young adulthood but may also develop during childhood or later in life. Common eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge-eating disorder. Eating disorders affect both men and women

BULIMIA

Behavioral Signs

- Talking constantly about food, dieting and/or weight
- Bingeing
- Hiding food or eating
- Making frequent trips to the bathroom especially right after eating
- Dieting very restrictively, vomiting, using laxatives, diuretics or diet pills or exercising excessively in an effort to undo effects of bingeing.

Psychological and Emotional Signs

- Mood shifts including irritability, depression, shame and self-hate
- Using eating and purging to cope with stress or feelings
- Feeling out of control with food
- Feelings of self-worth determined by weight and what is (or is not) eaten.

Physiological Signs

- Weight fluctuations or little or no weight gain in spite of consumption of large amounts of food
- Chronic sore throat
- Swollen glands or puffiness in the face, cracks in the corner of the mouth, broken blood vessels in eyes and face, damaged tooth enamel
- Fatigue and muscle aches.

ANOREXIA

Behavioral Signs

- Severely restricting food intake or fasting
- Ritualistic food behaviors such as counting bites, cutting food into tiny bites, playing with food on plate or preparing food for others and refusing to eat it
- Excessive exercising to lose weight
- Extreme fear of becoming fat
- Dressing in baggy or layered clothing to hide weight loss
- May binge, use laxatives, diuretics or enemas to get rid of food.

Psychological and Emotional Signs

- Mood shifts
- Feeling of inadequacy about her/his abilities
- Social isolating
- Feelings of self-worth determined by what is (or is not) eaten.

Physiological Signs

- Weight loss (often sudden and to very low body weight).