THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT EATING DISORDERS

What is considered an “eating disorder”?  
- Eating disorders are characterized by serious disturbances in eating habits.  
- They cause an individual to go too far to avoid gaining weight.  
- Common eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia, and binge eating.  
- It can be hard to differentiate between normal worries about weight and actual eating disorders.  
- Your doctor can diagnose an eating disorder by asking questions, performing a physical examination, and ordering tests.

What are the warning signs of an eating disorder?  
- Obsessing over body weight (even if not overweight), calories, and food.  
- Using diet pills, water pills, and laxatives to avoid gaining weight.  
- Self-inducing of vomiting after meals.  
- Lying about eating or refusing to eat.  
- Denying that anything is wrong.  
- Fainting.  
- Exercising too much.  
- No longer having menstrual periods.  
- Calluses or scars on the knuckles from forced vomiting.

How are eating disorders treated?  
- Individual and family counseling.  
- Diet and nutrition guidance.  
- Medical care and monitoring.  
- Referral to a specialist for treatment.  
- Hospitalization for individuals who are malnourished or very thin.  
- Treatment is tailored to meet individual needs.

For More Information

http://womenshealth.gov/body-image/eating-disorders/  
Information on eating disorders, including fact sheets on anorexia nervosa, bulimia, and binge eating, from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women’s Health.

www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/  
Information and support resources, including a parent tool kit, from the National Eating Disorders Association.


http://kidshealth.org/teen/food_fitness/problems/friend_eating_disorder.html  
Handout titled, “I Think My Friend May Have an Eating Disorder. What Should I Do?” from the Nemours Foundation.