

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT EATING DISORDERS

In the Clinic
Annals of Internal Medicine

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.

- 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.

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.



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://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/children/teens/eating/277.html>
Handout titled "Eating Disorders: Facts for Teens," from the American Academy of Family Physicians.

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.

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