

Eating Issues, Part 2

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This week we will talk about the prominent eating disorders, which are anorexia, bulimia and binge eating. Due to the amount of information on the above, we will need to give an overview with resources for further information and help with these disorders.

Anorexia Nervosa

Anorexia Nervosa is a serious, potentially life-threatening eating disorder characterized by self-starvation and excessive weight loss.

Warning signs

- Dramatic weight loss
- Preoccupation with weight, food, calories, fat grams, and dieting
- Refusal to eat certain kinds of food
- Frequent comments about feeling “fat” or overweight despite weight loss
- Anxiety about gaining weight or being “fat”
- Denial of hunger
- Development of food rituals
- Consistent excuses to avoid mealtimes or situations involving food
- Excessive, rigid exercise regimen
- Withdrawal from usual friends and activities

Bulimia Nervosa

Bulimia Nervosa is a serious, potentially life-threatening eating disorder characterized by a cycle of bingeing and compensatory behaviors such as self-induced vomiting designed to undo or compensate for the effects of binge eating.

Warning signs

- Evidence of binge eating
- Purging behaviors (vomiting, laxative or diuretic use)
- Excessive rigid exercise regimen
- Unusual swelling of the cheeks or jaw area
- Calluses on the back of the hands and knuckles from self-induced vomiting
- Withdrawal from usual friends and activities

Compulsive Overeating

- People suffering with compulsive overeating have what is characterized as an “addiction” to food, using food and eating as a way to hide from their emotions, to fill a void they feel inside, and to cope with daily stresses and problems in their lives.

Binge Eating Disorder

- Binge eating disorder is a combination of symptoms similar to those suffering from compulsive overeating and bulimia. Unlike bulimia, people do not purge following a binge episode.

It is important to remember that people suffering from eating disorders often have low self-esteem. For people suffering from eating disorders and those who love them, it is important to educate yourself and be aware of the resources available.

One resource is <http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/>

Next week we will talk about preventing eating disorders and what you can do yourself to eat nutritionally.

Solutions Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is also available as a resource to help assess someone with an eating disorder or a family member who is concerned about someone with an eating disorder and refer him or her to the appropriate treatment. Call 800-526-3485 for free confidential assistance.