

Eating Disorders

Eating disorders - such as anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating disorder - include extreme emotions, attitudes, and behaviors surrounding weight and food issues. Eating disorders are serious emotional and physical problems that can have life-threatening consequences for females and males.

BULIMIA NERVOSA is characterized by a secretive cycle of binge eating followed by purging. Bulimia includes eating large amounts of food--more than most people would eat in one meal--in short periods of time, then attempting to get rid of the food and calories through vomiting, laxative abuse, or over-exercising.

Symptoms include:

- Repeated episodes of bingeing and purging
- Feeling out of control during a binge and eating beyond the point of comfortable fullness
- Purging after a binge, (typically by self-induced vomiting, abuse of laxatives, diet pills and/or diuretics, excessive exercise, or fasting)
- Frequent dieting

EATING DISORDER (NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFIED)

may be diagnosed when there is some combination of the signs and symptoms of anorexia, bulimia, and/or binge eating disorder that do not meet the diagnostic criteria for one of these conditions alone. All eating disorders can cause serious physical and emotional health problems and require professional help.

ANOREXIA NERVOSA is characterized by self-starvation and excessive weight loss.

Symptoms include:

- Refusal to maintain body weight at or above a minimally normal weight for height, body type, age, and activity level
- Intense fear of weight gain or being "fat"
- Feeling "fat" or overweight despite dramatic weight loss
- Loss of menstrual periods
- Extreme concern with body weight and shape

BINGE EATING DISORDER or COMPULSIVE OVEREATING

is characterized by periods of uncontrolled, impulsive, or continuous eating beyond the point of feeling comfortably full. While there is no purging, there may be sporadic fasts or repetitive diets and often feelings of shame or self-hatred after a binge. People who overeat compulsively may struggle with anxiety, depression, and loneliness, which can contribute to their unhealthy episodes of binge eating. Body weight may vary from normal to moderate or severe obesity.

NationalEatingDisorders.org



Get Help

Counseling Center - counseling@wlu.edu or 458-8590

Confidential Helpline - 800-931-2237

National Eating Disorder Association - nationaleatingdisorders.org

To sign up for the Disordered Eating Support Group at W&L contact

Christy Barongan at cbarongan@wlu.edu

Self assessments are available at go.wlu.edu/counseling