



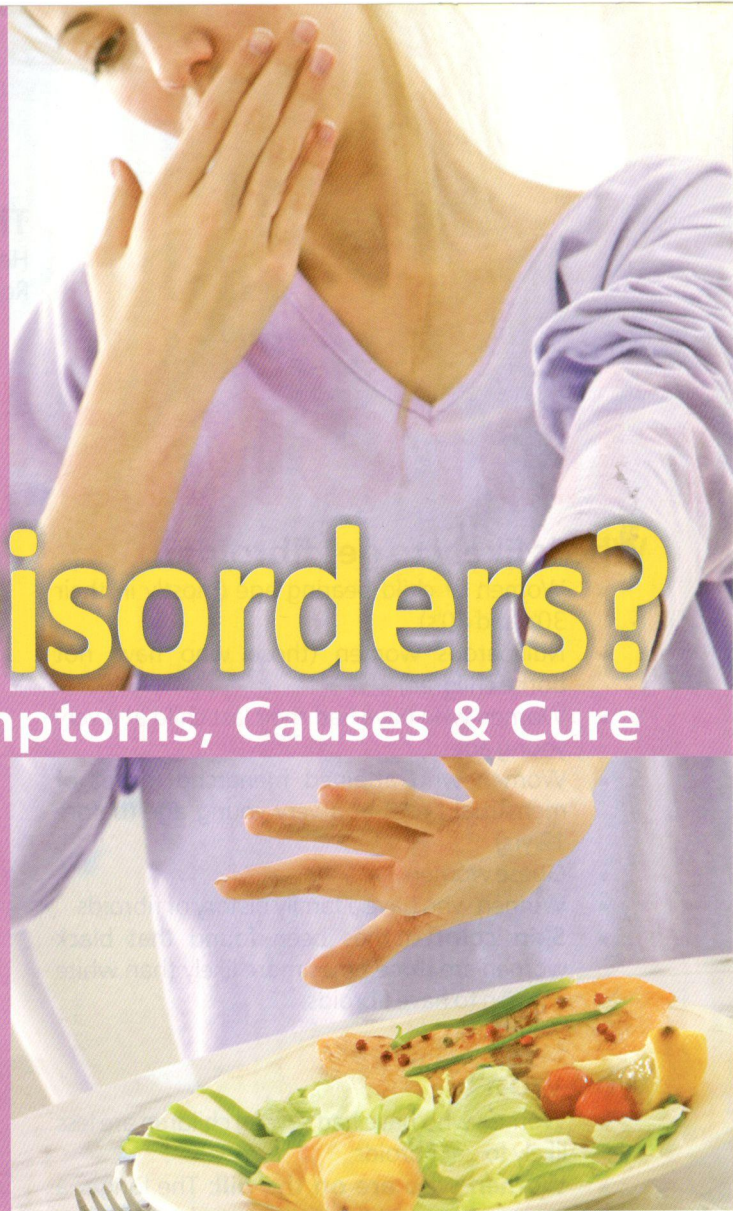
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Are You a Victim of

# Eating Disorders?

Symptoms, Causes & Cure

**T**here is no single cause for eating disorders. Although concerns about weight and body shape play a role in all eating disorders, the actual cause of these disorders appear to result from many factors, including cultural and family pressures and emotional and personality disorders. Genetics and biologic factors may also play a role.



Eating Disorders are psychiatric conditions with remarkable nutritional and medical complications. These complications can sometimes be life-threatening. As a general rule, eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia and binge eating disorders are characterized by extreme psychological, behavioral, and physiological attitude surrounding weight and food which adversely affect health of an individual. In eating disorder, girls perceive their diet in the light of appearance and body shape while boys are more concerned with body building.

The following are the signs and symptoms associated with eating disorders and their nutritional management

**Anorexia Nervosa is characterized by excessive weight loss and self starvation**

#### Physical

- Headaches, dizziness, lethargy, dry hair or hair loss, cheilitis (cracks at corner of mouth), muscle wasting, depletion of subcutaneous fat, irregular menses/amenorrhea.

#### Body image/weight

- Less than 85 % of normal or ideal body weight, unexplained rapid weight loss, falling below the normal growth pattern, frequent weighing or use of mirror, Intense fear of gaining weight and feeling fat even when emaciated (distorted body image), wearing loose clothing to hide body shape and size.

#### Food and exercise

- Denying hunger, eating tiny portions of food, skipping meals, use of diet pills, feeling uncomfortable while eating in front of others, exercising excessively.

#### Psychological

- Social withdrawing, frequent crying, irritability, sleep disturbances

#### Complications

- Menstrual dysfunction, hypoglycemia, depressed immune function, decreased bone mass, stress fractures, hypotension, delayed gastric emptying, constipation, bloating after meals, impaired concentration.





# NUTRITION

You are what you eat

**Bulimia Nervosa is 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.**

### Physical

- Dental erosion, cavities, frequent sore throat, heart burn, bloated face, blood shot eyes, edema, knuckle callouses ( trauma from teeth when fingers are used to induce vomiting)

### Body Weight

- Usually weight is near ideal body weight but often with weight fluctuations

### Food and exercise

- Large meals are eaten (uncontrolled eating) followed by starvation , Purging via diuretics, laxatives, emetics such as syrup of ipecac or enemas , Fasting or vomiting , eating in secret, excessive exercise

### Psychological

- Feeling uncomfortable while eating in front of others, Loneliness, shame and feeling of emptiness however pretends to be cheerful, Alcohol and drug use due to emotional imbalance

### Complications

Hypokalemia, hyponatremia, metabolic acidosis, dehydration, hypovolemia, impaired satiety, gastro esophageal reflux, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, acute pancreatitis, cardiac arrhythmias.

**Binge eating disorder is characterized by recurrent binge eating without the regular use of compensatory measures to counter the binge eating.**

### Body weight

- Usually individual is overweight or obese and may have obesity related diseases such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol

### Psychological

- Shame, guilt, emotional emptiness, low self esteem, feeling irritable when withdrawing from binge or trying to starve, eat less, feel depressed and sleepy immediately after over eating, feeling out of control when eating and unable to stop binges, being preoccupied with food, dieting and body weight

### Food and Exercise

- Losing and regaining weight (weight cycling), binge eating, frequent eating large amount in short time, eating to a point of extreme discomfort or eating when not hungry , finding difficult to exercise due to excessive weight and avoid exercise as it might call attention or increase awareness of one's own body.



## Nutritional Management

1. **Correct malnutrition:** If the caloric intake is found to be below baselines start with an initial intake of 1000-1600 kcal/day and progressively increase the calories.
2. **Balanced diet:** Include food from each of the food group – cereal, pulses, fruits, vegetables, milk and milk products as per the Food Guide Pyramid. Incorporate adequate protein, fat and dietary fiber with limited refined carbohydrates during meals, this will enhance satiety. A multivitamin-mineral supplement or highly fortified breakfast cereal may be necessary until a nutritionally adequate diet is achieved. Adequate fluid and soluble dietary fiber intake will minimize constipation and rebound fluid retention related to laxative withdrawal. Limit caffeine sources. Avoid fat-free and sugar-free foods.
3. **Regularity in meals:** Eat at least every 4 hours during the day. A regular eating pattern of small frequent meals, chewing the food well will facilitate the return of normal hunger and satiety cues, reduce binging, purging behaviors and minimize unwanted weight gain.
4. **Portion Counting:** Placing an average serving size of food on a plate will prevent over eating.
5. **Pattern of eating:** Avoid dieting and restricted eating. Eat when hungry and avoid eating to fullness. Chew the food well. Enjoy the taste of food.
6. **Exercise:** Regular aerobic exercise will enhance mood, decrease stress and improve metabolic efficiency.
7. **Remember** any food when taken in balance and moderation can be included in a healthy eating plan.
8. **Establish** a realistic weight range goal that is genetically feasible and compatible with natural body weight.
9. **Successful treatment** requires family support, empathetic, patient and non-judgmental attitude.

