



Eating Disorders

- One out of every 150 American females ages 12-30 years will develop an eating disorder. Statistically athletes are at a greater risk.
- 1/3 of all Americans are obese and 60% are overweight.
- 77% of individuals with eating disorders report that the illness can last anywhere from one to fifteen years or even longer in some cases.
- Anyone with an eating disorder is at risk for death.

- The mortality rate for eating disorders is approximately 20%. Death is usually due to a “side effect” of the disorder, i.e. cardiac arrest or kidney failure.
- Long-term, irreversible consequences of eating disorders may affect one’s physical and emotional health. Only 50% of all people with eating disorders report being “cured”.
- 10% of all people with eating disorders are male

The typical person with an eating disorder

- Obedient
- perfectionist
- over-compliant
- highly motivated
- successful academically
- well liked
- Signs of malnutrition.
- Menstrual irregularities.
- Loss of hair.
- Light-headedness.
- Blood-shot eyes.
- good athlete

Signs to look for include:

- Lack of confidence in performance.
- Ritualistic eating behaviors, such as cutting food into small pieces and playing with it.
- Obsession with calories.
- Obsession with weight.
- Distorted body image.
- Wearing layers of baggy clothing to hide thinness.

Signs to look for include:

- Social isolation
- Nervous at mealtime, avoidance of eating in public.
- Patterns of leaving the table directly to go to the bathroom.
- Running water in the bathroom after meals to hide the sound of vomiting.
- Significant weight loss.
- Obsession with grades.

Signs to look for include:

- Obsession with organization of personal space.
- High emotions; tearful, uptight, overly sensitive, restless.
- Recurrent overuse injuries and stress fractures.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Chronic fatigue.
- Compulsive exercising.
- Decrease in performance.
- Depression.

Anorexia Nervosa

- Intense fear of gaining weight or becoming fat, even though they are already under-weight.
- Distorted body image (i.e., claiming to “feel fat” even when emaciated), with an undue influence of body weight or shape on self-perception.
- Weight loss to less than 85% of normal body weight.
- Refusal to maintain body weight over a minimal normal weight for age and height.
- Denial of the seriousness of the current weight loss.
- Absence of at least three consecutive menstrual cycles.

Bulimia Nervosa

- Recurrent episodes of binge eating, characterized by both of the following:
- Purging - compensating for the food binge to prevent weight gain,
- Binge eating and purging, on average, at least twice a week for three months.
- Evaluating self-worth according to body shape and weight.

Compulsive Eating

- A large percentage of individuals with eating disorders are compulsive eaters.
- A compulsive eater keeps eating beyond the time when hunger has been satisfied. Eating is driven by anxiety, fear, frustration, or anger, rather than by hunger or even pleasure.
- Compulsive eaters do not eat for pleasure.
- Weight does not indicate compulsive eating.

“Bigger-exia”

- Describes individuals who use steroids and other ergogenic aids to build muscles. They are compulsive and excessive about body building workouts.
- These individuals see extreme size as something to aspire to.
- Many health problems are associated with the use of steroids.