

Treatment Options

All forms of maladaptive eating are serious when they affect your functioning. Treatment options exist that are effective in treating individuals who suffer from an eating disorder.

- Cognitive-behavioral therapy
- Art therapy
- Developing healthy boundaries
- Increasing self-esteem
- Developing a positive body image
- Journaling
- Relaxation training

Those who suffer from eating disorders may do so for an extended period of time. Dealing with behaviors associated with an eating disorder may involve determining the severity of the experience, understanding the influences that prompted its onset, and securing treatment options.

Although a person with an eating disorder may feel as though others are unable to relate to him or her, God says in Hebrews 13:5, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” (New International Version). Furthermore, He makes other everlasting promises that may be used as a source of comfort such as Psalm 139: 14-16. “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be” (NIV).

If you are in doubt about where to turn for assistance, please call:
Regent University Psychological Services Center at (757) 226-4488.



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Help for Eating Disorders



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Are you or someone you care about:

- Excessively fearful of becoming fat?
- Engaging in restrictive eating, compulsive exercise, vomiting, or the overuse of laxatives?
- Binge eating or excessively overeating?

Women and men of all ages suffer from disordered eating. Anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder are three types of eating disorders. However, symptoms may overlap between types. Furthermore, not all symptoms need to be present for one to have an eating disorder. If you have several of the symptoms listed, consulting with a professional therapist is recommended as you determine a way to cope with these issues.



Symptoms:

Anorexia Nervosa:

- Intense fear of gaining weight or being “fat”
- Refusal to maintain normal body weight for height, body type, age, and activity level
- Distorted body image
- May be accompanied by binge eating and/or purging
- Absence of menstrual cycle in female

Additional symptoms:

- Depressed mood
- Social withdrawal
- Insomnia
- Irritability
- Diminished interest in sex
- Obsessive thoughts of food
- Concern with eating in public
- Constipation
- Cold intolerance
- Fatigue or lack of energy
- Lanugo (fine downy hair)
- Dry skin

Bulimia Nervosa:

- Binge eating (eating an amount of food that is larger than most people would eat in short periods of time, accompanied with feeling a lack of control during the episode)
- Self-induced vomiting, laxative abuse, fasting, or excessive exercise occur to rid the body of food and calories
- Preoccupied with body weight and shape

Additional symptoms:

- Increased cavities and loss of dental enamel due to excessive purging
- Menstrual irregularity
- Depressed mood

Binge Eating Disorder:

- Binge eating episodes
- Impaired control over eating (eating rapidly, eating large amounts when not hungry)

Additional symptoms:

- Overexercise, purging, or laxative use
- Disgust, guilt, or depression over eating during and after binge episodes
- Concern over the long-term effect on body weight and shape after binge episode
- Body weight may vary from normal to mild, moderate, or severe obesity