

Signs & Symptoms of Eating Disorders

Compulsive Over-Eating

- Binge eating large quantities of food
- Constant grazing of food throughout day often secretively eating
- Obsessive type thought of food, meals, and the desire to lose weight
- Continued weight gain over time
- Sometimes obsessions with the scale or weighing oneself
- Inability to remain on a healthy meal plan without bingeing episodes
- Failed attempts to lose weight through various weight-loss diets, fasting or programs some even being extreme
- Marked decrease in self-esteem or self-confidence
- Possible mood swings
- Increased feelings of hopelessness or despair
- A feeling of not controlling eating compulsions
- Self-loathing may be present
- There is often a sense of "calm" which accompanies bingeing

Excess weight causes many health problems some are:

- Strain on heart
- Increase in blood pressure
- Difficulty breathing
- Stress on joints particularly knees
- Increased risk of diabetes
- Fatigue and decreased energy levels
- Changes in metabolism
- Too much weight carried can cause premature death

Bulimia

- Episodes of binge eating large quantities of food followed by purging
- Some abuse syrup of Ipecac for inducing vomiting
- Purging may be by vomiting, use and abuse of laxatives, diuretics or excessive exercise
- The binge-purge cycle is most often a secretive event
- Increasing isolation for purpose of bingeing and purging

- Obsessive thoughts of food, calories, weight, bingeing and purging
- Often periods of restricting food accompany the plan to binge and purge
- Decrease in the enjoyment of activities
- Increase in mood swings
- Self esteem and self confidence falls
- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
- Feelings of being alone with an out-of-control secret problem
- Intense fears of becoming fat and feeling fat
- Body distortion or seeing oneself as fat even if not
- Denial that there is a problem
- Generally individual is at or around normal weight
- Habit of chewing food and spitting it out
- There often is a "high" and sense of relief following purging behavior

Bulimia causes many health problems some are:

- Possible hair loss
- For women loss of Menses
- Stomach and digestive problems
- Dental problems
- Electrolyte imbalances, low potassium
- Physical dependency on laxatives
- Possible irreversible damage to intestines
- Internal bleeding from purging
- Possible dehydration
- Heart complications
- There can always be the potential of serious complications resulting in illness and death

Anorexia

- Denial that there is any problem
- Dramatic weight loss in short period
- Exaggerated and intense fears of becoming overweight
- Preoccupation with calories, food and weight
- Restricting food for prolonged periods
- Inability to stop dieting even when below normal weight

- Distorted body image or seeing oneself as fat even with evidence to the contrary
- Constant weighing of oneself throughout the day
- Increased isolation from family or friends
- Isolative behavior concerning food and exercise - may stop eating in front of others
- Increased prolonged periods of exercise for purpose of burning calories
- Increased dishonesty with self and others over eating and exercise habits
- Frequent arguments with others regarding eating habits
- Increased mood swings
- Self esteem and confidence levels drop
- Possible loss of hair from head
- Increased body hair as thermal insulator for body's decreasing ability to stay warm
- Loss of the ability to enjoy friends or activities
- Strong feelings of being in control of oneself
- There is often a "High" experienced with restricting and over exercising behavior
- Possible feelings of self-loathing

Anorexia causes many health problems:

- Changes in metabolism
- Chronically chilly or cold
- For women, loss of menses
- Drop in blood pressure
- Dizziness and weakness from malnutrition
- Body begins feeding itself off muscle tissue and storing fat
- Heart complications
- Vitamin and Mineral deficiencies
- If untreated Anorexia can cause premature death from starvation.