

DID YOU KNOW...

- Eating disorders are not choices, but serious biologically-influenced illnesses with a genetic component.
- It is estimated that between 28-74% of the risk for developing an eating disorder is through genetic heritability.
- Social and environmental factors such as bullying, social media, trauma, or onset of other mental illnesses can impact eating disorder development.
- Eating disorders affect people of all genders, ages, races, ethnicities, body shapes and weights, physical and neurological abilities, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses.
- 28.8 million Americans will experience an eating disorder in their lifetime.
- At least half of individuals with Bulimia Nervosa have a comorbid mood disorder and/or anxiety disorder.
- Less than 6% of people with eating disorders are medically diagnosed as “underweight.”
- Families can be the patients’ and providers’ best allies in treatment.
- Full recovery from an eating disorder is possible. Early detection, intervention, and access to treatment are important.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

National Alliance for Eating Disorders
Phone: (866) 662-1235
www.allianceforeatingdisorders.com
www.findEDhelp.com

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

The National Alliance for Eating Disorders (formerly The Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness) is the leading national non-profit organization providing education, referrals, and support for all individuals (and their loved ones) experiencing eating disorders. Founded in October 2000, The Alliance has worked tirelessly to support eating disorder awareness and education, promote and provide access to care, offer comprehensive services such as support groups and outpatient care, and eliminate the shame and stigma associated with eating disorders.

The Alliance’s services include:

- Referrals through a therapist-staffed helpline and comprehensive referral website/app, findEDhelp.com.
- Free, weekly, therapist-led support groups offered nationwide both virtually and in-person.
- Educational presentations to schools, communities, and agencies.
- Continuing education to healthcare providers and hospitals.
- Low-cost, life-saving, outpatient treatment to adults living in South Florida who are uninsured or underinsured.
- Unique and empowering scale smashing events and SmashTALK panel discussions aimed at college and university students.
- Advocacy for eating disorders and mental health legislation.

The Alliance understands that eating disorders are often impacted by a number of social, economic, and environmental factors. Using a Health at Every Size® framework, The Alliance aims to create an inclusive, culturally competent, and supportive space that acknowledges the multitude of factors that contribute to eating disorders.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE for Eating Disorders

WHAT IS BULIMIA NERVOSA?

Bulimia Nervosa is an eating disorder characterized by repeated episodes of binge eating and purging at least once a week for three months

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WHAT IS BULIMIA NERVOSA?

Bulimia Nervosa is an eating disorder characterized by repeated episodes of binge eating (consuming a large amount of food in a short period of time) and purging (eliminating calorie consumption) at least once a week for three months. Methods of purging may include self-induced vomiting, compulsive exercise, laxative use, diuretic use, insulin misuse, and/or diet pill use. Behaviors are typically accompanied by negative body image related to size, weight, and shape. Many individuals experiencing Bulimia Nervosa may also struggle with co-occurring conditions such as self-injury, substance abuse, and impulsivity. It is important to note that there are negative health consequences of equal severity across all eating disorder categories.

DSM-5 DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA

Recurrent episodes of binge eating characterized by BOTH of the following:

- Eating in a discrete amount of time (within a 2 hour period) large amounts of food.
- Sense of lack of control over eating during an episode.

Recurrent inappropriate compensatory behavior in order to prevent weight gain (purging).

The binge eating and compensatory behaviors both occur, on average, at least once a week for three months.

WARNING SIGNS (MAY INCLUDE)

- Lack of control over eating
- Secretive eating and/or missing food
- Visits to the bathroom after meals
- Preoccupation with food
- Weight fluctuations
- Excessive and compulsive exercise regimes
- Abuse of laxatives, diet pills, and/or diuretics
- Swollen glands in cheeks and neck
- Discoloration and/or staining of the teeth
- Broken blood vessels in eyes and/or face
- Sore throat, heartburn, or acid reflux
- Self-criticism and feelings of shame and guilt
- High levels of anxiety and/or depression

HEALTH COMPLICATIONS (MAY INCLUDE)

- Anemia, fatigue, and lack of energy
- Irregular menstruation or Amenorrhea
- Dizziness and low blood pressure
- Edema (swelling)
- Dehydration
- Gastric rupture and possible esophagus rupture
- Peptic ulcers
- Pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas)
- Hemorrhoids
- Tooth decay/gum disease
- Kidney and liver damage
- Electrolyte imbalances that can lead to irregular heartbeat and seizures

TREATMENT

Eating disorder treatment is essential and cannot be a luxury. However, only 1/3 of all individuals experiencing an eating disorder will receive treatment. The Alliance is dedicated to advocating and providing access to care for all individuals experiencing all types of eating disorders.

MEMBERS OF THE TEAM

- Individual Therapist
- Family Therapist
- Registered Dietitian/Nutrition Therapist
- Psychiatrist
- Physician
- Support Group
- Others

LEVELS OF CARE

- Outpatient (OP)
- Intensive Outpatient (IOP)
- Partial Hospitalization (PHP)
- Residential (RTC)
- Inpatient (IP)
- Acute Medical Stabilization

TREATMENT OPTIONS

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)
- Family-Based Treatment (FBT)
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
- Radically Open DBT (RO-DBT)
- Internal Family Systems (IFS)
- Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP)
- Emotion Focused Family Therapy (EFFT)
- Other therapies

GETTING HELP

If you think you or someone you know may be experiencing an eating disorder, please seek specialized, professional help as soon as possible. For more information on how to receive help, please visit findEDhelp.com, allianceforeatingdisorders.com, or call us at 866-662-1235.