



Cumbria, Northumberland,  
Tyne and Wear  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Eating Disorders

Easy read information



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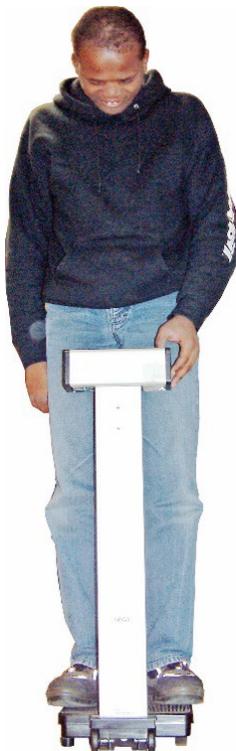
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**A member of staff or a carer can support you to read this booklet. They will be able to answer any questions that you have.**

## **About this leaflet**

- This leaflet is for people who might be having problems with eating but who aren't sure if they have an eating disorder.
- This leaflet is for people who have an eating disorder and who want to find out more information.

## **What is an eating disorder?**



If you worry about what you weigh and how you look so much that it changes your life, you might have an eating disorder.

You might think you need to lose weight even if you are thin.

You might eat too much to help you cope with things that are happening in your life.

If you think you do these things, you might have an eating disorder.

## Types of eating disorders

There are different types of eating disorders. These are the names and ways to tell if you might have them.



### Anorexia

- Not eating very much.
- Losing lots of weight very quickly.
- Being frightened of getting fat or putting on weight.
- If you are a woman, your periods might stop.
- Being underweight for your height.



### Bulimia

- Needing to eat lots and lots of foods with lots of calories, then making yourself sick.
- Taking laxatives to make you go to the toilet to help you lose weight.
- Feeling low, or feeling bad about yourself.



### Binge Eating Disorder

- Eating lots of food quickly, when you don't feel hungry and not stopping when you are full.
- Feel guilty when you have eaten.
- Eating in secret, away from other people.
- Putting on weight.

## Why do people have eating disorders?

Anyone can have an eating disorder.



Sometimes, people have eating disorders because of things happening in their lives, like:

- Wanting to be in control over something in their life.
- Having no confidence or feeling bad about themselves.
- Trying to be perfect – to look like people on TV or in magazines.
- Not knowing how to cope with difficult feelings.
- Losing someone they love.
- Having something bad happen in their lives, like being bullied or abused.
- Being worried about what other people think about ‘fat’ people.

## How eating disorders affect your body

If you have an eating disorder, your body might change:



- Your skin might become dry and your hair and nails could snap easily.
- Your teeth might start to go rotten.
- Your face and body might look fatter.
- Women might have problems with their periods. They may have problems getting pregnant.

## How eating disorders affect the way you feel



If you have an eating disorder, you might feel different:

- You might feel depressed or nervous.
- You might not like the way you look. You might not want to be around people.
- You might feel very tired but not be able to sleep.
- You might find it hard to concentrate.
- You find it hard to think.
- You might not feel like you want to hug or touch people.
- You might not want to have sex.

## Can I get help?



Thinking that you might have an eating disorder can be a scary thing.

Asking for help can also be frightening. If you want to get help you can talk to your doctor or nurse.

Your doctor or nurse might ask you to see someone who will help you to get better.

## Where to get help

These organisations can give you help and advice:



### **Beat Eating disorders**

Information and support for people who have eating disorders.

Telephone: 0808 801 0677

Email: [help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk](mailto:help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

[www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)



### **Mind Infoline**

Help and information and support.

Telephone: 0300 123 3393

Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)



You can also get help and information from your doctor or nurse.



Easy Read version developed by:

- Skills for People, Telephone: 0191 281 8737  
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Adapted from Eating Disorders - A Self Help Guide written by Jen Murphy, Jenny Johns, Dr Lesley Maunder and Lorna Cameron  
[www.cntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp)

Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre Tel: 0191 246 7288

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