

Help for Problems with Eating Disorders

An eating disorder is a mental health condition where you use the control of food to cope with feelings and other situations. If you or people around you are worried that you have an unhealthy relationship with food, you could have an eating disorder. Are you:

- spending a lot of time worrying about your weight and body shape
- avoiding socialising when you think food will be involved
- eating very little food
- making yourself sick or taking laxatives after you eat
- exercising too much
- having very strict habits or routines around food
- changes in your mood, such as being withdrawn, anxious or depressed

- feeling cold, tired or dizzy
- pains, tingling or numbness in your arms and legs (poor circulation)
- feeling your heart racing, fainting or feeling faint
- problems with your digestion, such as bloating, constipation or diarrhoea
- your weight being very high or very low for someone of your age and height
- not getting your period or other delayed signs of puberty

You can talk in confidence to an adviser from eating disorders charity <u>Beat</u> by calling the Beat helpline on 0808 801 0677.

Treatment and Support Groups

- You can recover from an eating disorder, but it may take time and recovery will be different for everyone.
- If you're referred to an eating disorder specialist or team of specialists, they'll be responsible for your care.
- They should talk to you about the support you might need, such as for other conditions you have, and include this in your treatment plan.
- Your treatment will depend on the type of eating disorder you have, but usually includes a talking therapy.
- You may also need regular health checks if your eating disorder is having an impact on your physical health.
- Your treatment may also involve working through a guided self-help programme if you have bulimia or binge eating disorder.
- Most people will be offered individual therapy, but those with binge eating disorder may be offered group therapy.
- Read more about the different treatments for:
 - <u>anorexia</u>
 - <u>bulimia</u>
 - <u>binge eating disorder</u>

- If you think you may have an eating disorder, see a GP as soon as you can.
- A GP will ask about your eating habits and how you're feeling, plus check your overall health and weight.
- They may refer you to an eating disorder specialist or team of specialists.
- It can be very hard to admit you have a problem and ask for help. It may make things easier if you bring a friend or loved one with you to your appointment.
- You can also talk in confidence to an adviser from eating disorders charity <u>Beat</u> by calling the Beat helpline on 0808 801 0677.

