

Disordered Eating

Millions of Americans suffer from an eating disorder (also called disordered eating). There are many kinds of disordered eating with some leading to more severe ones like Anorexia Nervosa, Binge Eating Disorder, and Bulimia Nervosa.

Signs of Disordered Eating

- Compulsive exercising after meals
- Eating a lot in a short amount of time
- Food rituals (chewing food longer than necessary, eating in secret)
- Forced vomiting after meals or laxative misuse
- Hiding food or throwing it away
- Restrictive eating
- Spending a lot of time worrying about your weight and body shape

Disordered Eating Treatment

Treatment is necessary because eating disorders have social, emotional, and physical causes and can be difficult to stop without help.

How to Get Help

- Join a support group for people with the same disease of disordered eating
- Seek local community health or therapy
- Talk to a behavioral health provider to address the emotional parts of an eating disorder like anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem
- Talk to your health care team about your eating disorder and how to get help
- Talk to your health care team to help you learn how to pick out healthy food, eat healthy portions, and eat at regular times so you can develop a healthy relationship to food

Preventing Disordered Eating

Parents, caregivers, educators, and health care providers can help prevent eating disorders by promoting positive body image and healthy habits.

- Educate (Start early in your child's life.)
 - Do not soothe or calm children with food
 - Encourage eating only when hungry and not eating when not truly hungry
 - Take time to discuss social pressures and self image
 - Teach children to eat to satisfy hunger with healthy, nutritional food choices
 - Teach your children about the changes their bodies will have during puberty
 - Teach your children to eat healthy foods
- Encourage a Healthy Lifestyle
 - Encourage sports, dancing, walking, biking, and other physical activities
 - Involve your kids in physical activities
 - Limit television, phone, and computer use
- Lead by Example
 - Do not be negative about your body, your child's body, or other people's bodies
 - Eat a healthy diet, but do not practice restrictive dieting
 - Have an active lifestyle that includes regular exercise

For more information, visit the National Institute of Mental Health:
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/eating-disorders>