What Are Eating Disorders?

Eating disorders include extreme thoughts, emotions, & behaviors surrounding weight, food, & body shape. There is a pronounced disruption in eating behaviors & weight management as well as intense anxiety about body weight & size. Eating disorders are often a dangerous response to stress. They are serious emotional & physical problems that can have life-threatening consequences for females & males. The most common eating disorders are described below:
Anorexia Nervosa

- Restricted eating, self-starvation & excessive weight loss
- Intense fear of & obsession with weight gain & the idea of becoming ?fat?
- Persistent behavior to prevent weight gain
- Self-esteem overly related to body image
- Body image is distorted- person may feel fat despite being underweight
- Inability to appreciate the severity of the situation

Bulimia Nervosa

- Cycle of binge eating followed by purging
- Binge eating involves eating large amounts of food in a short period of time
- Feeling out of control during the binge
- Purging may include: Self-induced vomiting, abusing laxatives / diuretics, fasting, abusing diet pills, or excessively exercising
- Extreme concern with body weight & shape

Binge Eating Disorder

- Recurrent binge eating episodes which involve periods of uncontrolled, impulsive, or continuous eating beyond the point of feeling comfortably full
- Sense of lack of control over eating during the episode (e.g. feeling like you can?t stop)
- Binge eating episodes often associated with:
  - Eating more rapidly than usual
  - Eating large amounts of food when not physically hungry
  - Eating alone due to embarrassment
  - Feeling disgusted, depressed or guilty after a binge
  - May involve fasts, repetitive (yo-yo) dieting & feelings of shame or self-hatred

Other Eating Disorders

- Other Eating Disorders can include some combination of the signs and symptoms of anorexia, bulimia, and/or binge eating disorder. While these behaviors may not be clinically considered a full syndrome eating disorder, they can still be physically dangerous & emotionally draining.
The Endless Binge & Restrict Cycle

Feelings: guilt, remorse, fear of weight gain

Actions: get "in control" by dieting or restricting

Diet/Restrict

Actions: physical or emotional needs lead to inability to restrict

Feelings: being "good", anxiety about following plan properly

Binge/Overeat

{you}

Adapted from: http://www.beautifulmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/the-endless-b... [2]

Source URL: https://campushealth.unc.edu/health-topics/body-image-eating-disorders

Links