

## Eating Disorders – Are They?



Eating disorders are serious & sometimes fatal illnesses that cause severe disturbances to a person's eating behaviours & well-being.

Although many disordered eating behaviours are detrimental to the person's health, sometimes they serve a certain purpose therefore, the person may struggle to find the motivation to change. An important part of recovery is body acceptance & encouraging healthy body image & health behaviours at every size.

### Bulimia Nervosa

A cycle of bingeing & later finding ways to get rid of unwanted calories (ie., vomiting, abuse of laxatives, diuretics, excessive exercise and/or fasting); self-esteem tied to body shape & weight; affecting 0.5% of men & 1.5% of women in their lifetime

### Anorexia Nervosa

Drastic weight loss from excessive food restriction with extreme fear of gaining weight; self-esteem is tied to body shape & weight; affecting 0.9% of women & 0.3% of men in their lifetime

### Binge Eating Disorder

Repeatedly eating high amounts of food in a small amount of time but without purging episodes; affecting 2.0% of men & 3.5% of women in their lifetime

### Avoidance/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder

Limiting intake of certain food based on food characteristics or a past negative experience

### Other Specified Feeding & Eating Disorder

Not one of the above disorders, but still serious symptoms

## Psychological Treatment Options

A Psychologist can help address underlying motivational issues, explore the underpinnings of the problem, teach skills that encourage behaviour change, & support people throughout recovery.

A Psychologist trained in eating disorders can help you assess eating & feeding problems, examine associated body image issues, teach ways to gain control over them & offer evidence-based psychotherapy including:

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Eye-Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR)
- Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT)
- Maudsley Approach for family treatment

### **More Information/Sources:**

Canadian Psychological Association: Eating Disorders Fact Sheets

[https://www.cpa.ca/docs/File/Publications/FactSheets/PsychologyWorksFactSheet\\_EatingDisorders.pdf](https://www.cpa.ca/docs/File/Publications/FactSheets/PsychologyWorksFactSheet_EatingDisorders.pdf)

National Eating Disorder Information Centre <http://nedic.ca/know-facts/statistics>

American Psychological Association <http://www.apa.org/topics/eating/treatment.aspx>

National Institute of Mental Health <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/eating-disorders/index.shtml>