

Common Signs and Symptoms of Eating Disorders (Anorexia/Bulimia)

1. Dramatic weight loss in a relatively short period of time.
2. Wearing big or baggy clothes or dressing in layers to hide body and/or weight loss.
3. Obsession with calories and fat content of foods.
4. Obsession with continuous exercise.
5. Frequent trips to the bathroom immediately following meals (sometimes accompanied with water running in the bathroom for a long period of time to hide the sound of vomiting).
6. Visible food restriction and self-starvation.
7. Visible bingeing and/or purging.
8. Use or hiding use of diet pills, laxatives, ipecac syrup (can cause immediate death!) or enemas.
9. Isolation. Fear of eating around and with others.
10. Hiding food in strange places (closets, cabinets, suitcases, under the bed) to avoid eating (Anorexia) or to eat at a later time (Bulimia).
11. Flushing uneaten food down the toilet (can cause sewage problems).
12. Vague or secretive eating patterns.
13. Keeping a "food diary" or lists that consists of food and/or behaviors (ie., purging, restricting, calories consumed, exercise, etc.)
14. Pre-occupation or obsession with food, weight (even if "average" weight or thin), and/or cooking.
15. Visiting websites that promote unhealthy ways to lose weight.
16. Reading books about weight loss and eating disorders.
17. Unusual food rituals: shifting the food around on the plate to look eaten; cutting food into tiny pieces; making sure the fork avoids contact with the lips (using teeth to scrap food off the fork or spoon); chewing food and spitting it out, but not swallowing; dropping food into napkin on lap to later throw away.
18. Self-defeating statements after food consumption.
19. Hair loss. Pale or "grey" appearance to the skin.
20. Dizziness and headaches.
21. Frequent sore throats and/or swollen glands.
22. Complaints of often feeling cold.
23. Low blood pressure.
24. Loss of menstrual cycle.
25. Constipation or incontinence.
26. Bruised or calluses knuckles; bloodshot or bleeding in the eyes; light bruising under the eyes and on the cheeks.
27. Mood swings. Depression. Fatigue.
28. Insomnia. Poor sleeping habits

BE AWARE: A person DOES NOT need to appear underweight or even "average" to suffer ANY of these signs and symptoms. Many men and women with Eating Disorders appear NOT to be underweight.. it does not mean they suffer less or are in any less danger.