

EATING DISORDERS

A person with an eating disorder may be underweight, normal weight or overweight. These disorders are serious potentially life-threatening mental disorders/

A person with an eating disorders has distortions in thoughts and emotions relating to body image, that lead to changes in eating and exercise behaviors that interfere with the person's normal life.

Behavioral Warning Signs

- Dieting behaviors
- Binge eating
- Evidence of vomiting or laxative use after eating
- Excessive, obsessive or ritualistic exercise behavior
- Avoidance of eating meals
- Behaviors focused on body shape and weight

Physical Warning Signs

- Weight loss or fluctuations
- Sensitivity to cold
- Changes in menstruation
- Fainting

Psychological Warning Signs

- Preoccupation with food, body shape and weight
- Extreme body dissatisfaction
- Distorted body image

This person may feel shame, guilt and distress about eating or exercise behaviors. They may use deceit to hide eating and exercise behaviors

Types of Eating Disorders

Anorexia Nervosa - this person is underweight and uses extreme weight -loss strategies. They may use dieting, fasting, over-exercising, slimming pills, diuretics, laxatives and vomiting to maintain their weight loss.

They maintain a very low body weight - about 15% below normal. Most are female and it usually presents itself during adolescence.

Bulimia Nervosa- this person has frequent episodes of overeating followed by purging fasting, excessive exercise, or the use of laxatives to control weight. This person is not usually underweight. More common in females and usually presents during adolescence.