



Did you know...

- ◇ At least 5-10 million girls and women and 1 million boys and men in the United States are struggling with eating disorders. This means there are lots of people who understand what you are going through and are eager to help you and your friend.
- ◇ 90% of the people suffering from eating disorders in the United States are female.
- ◇ Eating disorders are serious health issues, which can result in illness and even death. Help is available.

Learn more about eating and body image issues:

- www.nationaleatingdisorders.org
toll-free helpline 1-800-931-2237
- www.something-fishy.org

Mission Statement

The Pat Walker Health Center, University Health Services provides professional and comprehensive medical care, mental health care, health education, and health promotion for a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff. We, the University Health Services Staff of the Pat Walker Health Center, have a commitment to physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional health, the highest standards of quality, and appreciation of the value of each individual. Through these endeavors we support the educational mission of the University of Arkansas and the growth of each individual.

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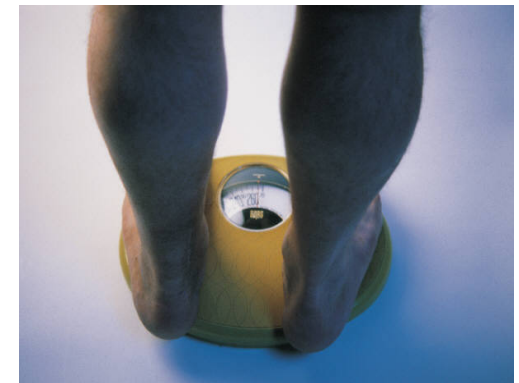


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How to Help a Friend with Eating and Body Image Issues



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Eating Disorder or Disordered Eating:

What's the difference?

Eating Disorders are defined by the three different conditions:

ANOREXIA: Self-starvation and refusal to eat or maintain weight at a healthy or normal level for one's age, size, height, and activity level. It is an intense fear of being overweight despite excessive weight loss.

BULIMIA: Cycles of binge eating and purging (eating large amounts of food, more than most people would eat in one meal or in short periods of time, then getting rid of the food through vomiting, laxative use, or over-exercising).

BINGE EATING/COMPULSIVE EATING: Eating large amounts of food in a short amount of time. It is impulsive or continuous overeating not accompanied by purging or over-exercising.



Warning Signs of Eating Disorders

- ❖ A marked increase or decrease in weight not related to a medical condition.
- ❖ The development of abnormal eating habits such as severe dieting, preference for strange foods, withdrawn or ritualized behavior at mealtime, eating only "safe" foods, or secretive binges.
- ❖ An intense preoccupation with weight and body image.
- ❖ Self-induced vomiting, periods of fasting, or laxative, diet pill, or diuretic abuse.
- ❖ Compulsive or excessive exercising.
- ❖ Feelings of isolation, depression, or irritability.

What if Your Friend Won't Listen?

If your friend has become obsessed with eating, exercising, or his/her body, they probably need professional help. They may be angry with you or deny that there is a problem. If they won't listen, talk with someone who can help.

People struggling with anorexia, bulimia, or binge eating **DO** need professional help. It is recommended that treatment include some combination of help from a nutritionist, doctor, counselor or psychiatrist, health educator, and possibly a support group.

Remember

You cannot force someone to seek help, change their habits, or adjust their attitudes. You will make important progress in honestly sharing your concerns, providing support, and knowing where to go for more information. If you choose to help, be aware that you are making a commitment.

How to Help a Friend With Eating & Body Image Issues

- ❖ **Learn** as much as you can about eating disorders.
- ❖ **Be Honest.** Talk openly and honestly about your concerns with the person who is struggling with eating or body image problems. Don't avoid them!
- ❖ **Be caring, but firm.** Caring about your friend does NOT mean being manipulated by him or her. Your friend must be responsible for his or her actions and the consequences.
- ❖ **Tell someone about your concerns.** Tell someone who can help, preferably a parent, counselor, or health educator. It may seem very difficult to know when, if at all, to tell someone else about your concerns. Don't wait until the situation is so severe that your friend's life is in danger.

