

FACTS ABOUT EATING DISORDERS

Eating disorders are receiving lots of attention recently in the media and from mental health professionals. Eating disorders, however, are not new problems. They date back to the times of the Roman Empire. One important difference is that now there are treatments for these problems.

ANOREXIA AND BULIMIA

Women are much more likely to have an eating disorder than men. There are two types of eating disorders that involve the fear of having fat in one's body. **Anorexia** is a disorder in which one eats very small quantities of food. **Bulimia** is a disorder in which one alternates between eating too much food and purging it out of his/her body. Following is a list of various symptoms of eating disorders:

- Extreme weight change
- Being cold a lot
- Stomach problems, such as constipation
- Skin problems, poor hair or nails
- Excessive exercise to burn calories
- Use of vomiting, laxatives or fluid pills
- Feeling fat or large when one is really thin
- Tendency to hide or stifle emotions instead of expressing them

OBESITY

The opposite eating disorder from anorexia or bulimia is obesity, which is the end result of taking in more calories than you burn over a period of time. As with eating disorders, obesity can cause serious health problems. Among those associated with obesity are heart disease, high blood pressure and gall bladder disease.

TREATMENT

The ultimate goal in the treatment of eating disorders is to find a reasonable intake of food that will sustain the person's health, while allowing them to feel comfortable with their weight. Eating disorders are usually treated with group or individual counselling, consultations with dieticians or physician, and peer groups to provide emotional support.

One of the most frequently forgotten facts about eating disorders is that they are a serious problem, which left untreated, have a poor rate of recovery and can be fatal.

If you know someone who has several of these warnings signs, simply call 1-800-6738 9595. We offer confidential assessments at no cost or obligation.



Level 10, Mount Elizabeth Hospital
3 Mount Elizabeth
Singapore 228510