

# A Breakdown of Eating Disorders

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Eating disorders are multifaceted illnesses that extend far beyond food; food often acts as a way to cope with difficult feelings and situations. Millions of women and men are affected by eating disorders in the United States every year, but there is hope for recovery!

## Common Symptoms

### ANOREXIA

- Significantly low weight due to a restriction of calories
- Intense fear of gaining weight or becoming fat
- Preoccupation with body image, dieting and nutritional content of food

### BULIMIA

- Typically of normal weight, but may be slightly overweight
- Preoccupation with body weight and shape
- Binge eating, typically in secret, to the point of pain/discomfort
- Behaviors such as self-induced vomiting, excessive exercise, misuse of laxatives and/or diuretics, and fasting to compensate for binge eating

### BINGE-EATING DISORDER

- Eating a considerably large amount of food in a discrete amount of time (e.g., within any two-hour period), often to relieve stress or tension
- Sense of lack of control over what one is eating during binge episodes
- Tendency to eat normally around others and then overeat when alone



Counseling Center

951.689.1120

calbaptist.edu/counseling

## Here are the facts

- **20-25% of college students** currently struggle with an eating disorder.
- Full-blown eating disorders **typically begin between ages 18 and 21**.
- **91% of women** surveyed on a college campus had **attempted to control their weight through dieting**.
- While women are more commonly affected by eating disorders, **millions of men and boys also struggle** with all forms of eating disorders.
- **Bipolar, depressive and anxiety disorders** commonly co-occur with eating disorders.
- Eating disorders have the **highest mortality rate** of any mental illness.

## How to help someone struggling with an eating disorder

- *Recognize that eating disorders go deeper than just food and weight.*
- *Compliment your loved one's personality instead of how they look.*
- *Make time to talk with your loved one in a private setting.*
- *Those who are struggling may feel lonely. Let your loved one know you care and that you're there to listen.*
- *Validate how they feel and try to understand their experiences because they may be feeling very misunderstood.*
- *Use "I" statements and gently express your concern for them (for example, "I am concerned about you because I've noticed a change in how you eat").*
- *Avoid talking about their appearance and weight.*
- *Avoid giving simple solutions like, "If you just start eating again, you'll get better!"*
- *Ask how you can help (for example, offer to walk them to the CBU Counseling Center).*

## Think you might have an eating disorder?

Take an anonymous online screening at [screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/calbaptist](https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/calbaptist)

## Where to get help

- CBU Counseling Center (951.689.1120)
- Valenta, Rancho Cucamonga (909.771.8023)
- Loma Linda Behavioral Medicine Center, Redlands (909.558.9275)

*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. Psalm 139:14*