

A Breakdown of Eating Disorders

by Whitney Machado, MFT Intern

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

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