

## Symptoms of an Eating Disorder

Symptoms of Eating Disorders can be very complex, below is a brief description of the symptoms of Anorexia, Bulimia and Binge Eating.



We recommend visiting The Eating Disorder Association website [www.edauk.com](http://www.edauk.com) for a more in-depth understanding.

### Symptoms of Anorexia

A person with anorexia may have some of the following symptoms:

- Body weight that is much less expected for their age and height
- Restrict types of food especially ones containing fat
- Avoid eating with other people
- Cut their food into many pieces so that it looks like they have eaten some
- Be very secretive about food
- Have an obsession with exercise
- Use appetite suppressants such as diet pills
- Use excessive amounts of laxatives
- Self induce vomiting
- Deny being underweight or have any kind of problem

### Symptoms of Bulimia

Bulimia can often go unnoticed until they develop health problems, however many people with bulimia may:

- Avoid eating with other people
- Disappear to the toilet after meals in order to vomit the food they have just eaten
- Have an intense fear of putting on weight
- Self harm
- Have an obsession with exercise
- Have cravings for food
- Have frequent weight fluctuations

### Symptoms of Binge Eating

Most of us over eat from time to time, and many people feel they frequently eat more than they should, but for some people this can occur too often which impacts significantly on their lives.

Most people with a serious binge eating problem have:

- Frequent episodes of eating what others would consider an abnormally large amount of food.
- Frequent feelings of being unable to control what or how much is being eaten
- Several of these feelings or behaviours:
  - Eating much more rapidly than usual.
  - Eating until uncomfortably full.
  - Eating large amounts of food, even when not physically hungry.
  - Eating alone out of embarrassment at the quantity of food being eaten.
  - Feelings of disgust, depression, or guilt after overeating.

### **Causes of Anorexia, Bulimia and Binge Eating**

Doctors do not know at present the exact cause of Eating Disorders, the reasons for developing it can be different for each person.

Certain traits are common in people with an eating disorder, these include:

- A low self esteem
- A need to please other people
- Perfectionism
- Depression
- Other mental health problems such as OCD

A specific emotionally upsetting event