February 2008

What is an Eating Disorder?

Anorexia, Bulimia, and Binge eating disorders are devastating eating disorders that affect so many women and men. Eating disorders are serious potentially life-threatening conditions that can affect a person’s emotional and physical health. These psychological conditions known as “eating disorders” are real illnesses that result in extreme emotions, attitudes, and behaviors surrounding weight and food issues.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Cholesterol Survival Course

The healthy Literacy Program will be holding a cholesterol survival course on March 5, 2008. It is open to the public and free of charge, lunch will be included. It will be held in room A119 at the Rio Grande campus from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Please call (915) 831-4142 or 831-4144 to register.

National Eating Disorder Awareness Week

National Eating Disorder Awareness Week is observed during the last week of February starting February 24th and ending on March 1st. This week takes into consideration that eating disorders can affect both men and women, at any age and of any race.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

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Love, like a river, will cut a new path whenever it meets an obstacle.

- Crystal Middlemas -

Symptoms of Anorexia Nervosa

- Refusal to maintain body weight at or above a minimally normal weight for age and height.
- Intense fear of gaining weight or being “fat”.
- Feeling “fat” or overweight despite dramatic weight loss.
- Loss of menstrual periods, amenorrhea.
- Extreme concern with body weight and shape.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org
Health Consequences of Anorexia Nervosa

- Abnormally slow heart rate and low blood pressure which can lead to heart failure.
- Reduction of bone density (osteoporosis), which results in dry, brittle bones.
- Muscle loss and weakness.
- Severe dehydration, which can result in kidney failure.
- Fainting, fatigue, and overall weakness.
- Dry hair and skin, hair loss is common.
- Growth of downy hair called “lanugo” all over the body, including the face, in an effort to keep the body warm.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Warning Signs of Bulimia Nervosa

- Evidence of binge eating, including disappearance of large amounts of food in short periods of time or the existence of wrappers and containers indicating the consumption of large amounts of food.
- Evidence of purging behaviors, including frequent trips to the bathroom after meals, signs and/or smells of vomiting, presence of wrappers or packages of laxatives or diuretics.
- Excessive, rigid exercise regimen—despite weather, fatigue, illness, or injury, the need to “burn off” calories taken in.
- Unusual swelling of the cheeks or jaw area.
- Calluses on the back of the hand and knuckles from self-induced vomiting.
- Discoloration or staining of teeth.
- Creation of lifestyle schedules or rituals to make time for binge and purge sessions.
- Withdrawal from usual friends and activities.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Bulimia Nervosa

Bulimia is characterized by a secretive cycle of binge eating followed by purging. It is a serious condition that includes eating large amounts of food in short periods of time, then getting rid of the food through self-induced vomiting, laxative abuse, or over-exercising.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Symptoms of Bulimia Nervosa

- Repeated episodes of binging and purging.
- Feeling out of control during binge and eating beyond the point of comfortable fullness.
- Purging after a binge, typically by self-induced vomiting, abuse of laxatives, diet pills and/or diuretics, excessive exercise, or fasting.
- Frequent dieting.
- Extreme concern with body weight and shape.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org
Binge Eating Disorder

Binge eating disorder is also known as “compulsive overeating”. It is a type of eating disorder characterized by periods of uncontrolled, impulsive, or continuous eating episodes beyond the point of feeling comfortably full. Purging does not exist, however there may be sporadic fasts or repetitive diets. The individual suffering from this condition often experiences feelings of shame or self-hatred after a binge episode. Anxiety, depression and loneliness have been attributed to their unhealthy episodes of binge eating.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Statistics about Anorexia Nervosa

- Approximately 90-95% of anorexia nervosa sufferers are girls and women.
- Between 0.5-1% of American women suffer from anorexia nervosa.
- Anorexia Nervosa is one of the most common psychiatric diagnoses in young women.
- Between 5-20% of individuals struggling with anorexia will die. The probabilities of death increase within that range depending on the length of the condition.
- Anorexia nervosa has one of the highest death rates of any mental health condition.
- Anorexia Nervosa typically appears in early to mid-adolescence.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Symptoms of Binge Eating Disorder (BED)

- Frequent episodes of eating large quantities of food in short periods of time.
- Feeling out of control over eating behavior.
- Feeling ashamed or disgusted by the behavior.

There are also several behavioral indicators of BED including eating when not hungry and eating in secret.

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Health Consequences of Binge Eating Disorder

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol levels
- Heart disease
- Diabetes Mellitus
- Gallbladder disease

Source: -unknown-

Statistics about Binge Eating Disorder

- The prevalence is approximately 1-5% of the general population
- Binge eating affects 20% more women than men
- People that struggle with binge eating can be normal or heavy weight
- Depression is strongly related to binge eating

Source: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org
What Causes Eating Disorders?

Eating disorders are a combination of behavioral, interpersonal, and social factors. Eating disorders are often about much more than food. People use eating disorders to help them cope with painful emotions and to feel in control of their life. Here are the factors that contribute to eating disorders

**Psychological Factors**
- Low self-esteem
- Feeling of lack of control of ones life
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Loneliness

**Interpersonal Factors**
- Troubled family/ personal relationships
- Difficulty expressing emotions and feelings
- History of being teased or ridiculed because of weight or size
- History of physical/sexual abuse

**Social Factors**
- “Thinness” being culturally accepted
- Cultures that place importance on having the “perfect body”
- Cultural definitions that include specific body weights and shapes for both men and women
- Cultures that value people on physical appearance

**Biological Factors**
- Scientists are still trying to figure out if there is a possible biologic or biochemical cause of eating disorders. They have, however, found that some people with eating disorders do have an imbalance in the chemicals that control hunger, appetite, and digestion.
- Research has indicated that eating disorders are highly genetic. Eating disorders run in families.

Source: -unknown-

What Can You Do to Help Prevent Eating Disorders?

- Learning as much as you can about eating disorders will help you avoid judgmental attitudes about food, weight, body shape, and eating disorders
- Forget that having the perfect body shape, weight, or going on a diet will lead you to happiness and fulfillment.
- Change your opinions about thinness and weight loss are good, and that body fat and weight gain signify laziness, worthlessness, or immorality
- Don’t categorize your foods into good or bad, you just need to eat a balanced variety of foods
- Don’t judge yourself or others based on body weight or shape, don’t judge peoples characters, personality, or value on their weight

Source: -unknown-