



## Eating Disorders

### What are Eating Disorders

Eating disorders are a serious mental illness that affects 1.6 million people in the U.K. Eating disorders are more than just going on a diet to lose weight or trying to ensure that you exercise every day. Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa are the most common types of eating disorders but other disorders include binge eating, food phobias and body image disorder.

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### What is Anorexia Nervosa?

People with anorexia have extreme weight loss, due to very strict dieting. Individuals may restrict their food intake by dieting, fasting or obsessively exercising or often a combination of all three. The small amount of food that they allow themselves to eat becomes an obsession. They may also make themselves sick and/or abuse laxatives. People with anorexia believe they are fat and are frightened to lose control and become what is in fact normal weight.

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### What is Bulimia Nervosa?

Bulimia is similar to anorexia. A person with bulimia craves food and will binge eat. That is, they eat large quantities of food, in one go, usually in secret and then compensate in extreme ways such as forced vomiting, laxatives or excessive exercise. Sufferers are very afraid of becoming fat.

Although anorexia and bulimia are very similar, people with anorexia are generally very thin and under weight whilst those with bulimia may be normal weight or perhaps overweight.

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### Where to Get Help?

SEEK HELP QUICKLY. Asking for help is never easy but there are several options you can take:-

- Find someone you can trust and can talk openly about your difficulties, e.g. family, friend, member of staff
- Talk to your G.P.
- Arrange an appointment at the University Counseling Service
- Contact **beat** – the leading UK charity for people with eating disorders and their families

<http://www.b-eat.co.uk/Home> or telephone the **beat Helpline** 0845 634 1414

beat is currently working with UK Athletics

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