

## Fast Facts

### Anorexia Nervosa

- Eating disorder classified by an inaccurate perception of weight and strong fear of gaining weight despite not being overweight
- Try to control weight and shape by restricting the amount of food being consumed, exercising excessively, purposely vomit after eating or misusing laxatives, diet aids, diuretics or enemas
  - It isn't about the food, but about maintaining control
  - Equate being thin with self-worth
  - Hide thinness, eating habits or physical problems from others
  - Basically the same as starvation
  - Cause is unknown
- People at high risk include perfectionists, those with an increased emotional sensitivity, those who have high levels of perseverance, those with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) or those with high levels of anxiety
- Often associated with other mental health disorders, such as depression, mood disorders, personality disorders, alcohol/substance misuse and self-injury/suicidal thoughts/attempts
- More prevalent than ever before because of the importance our cultural places on being thin and associating this with success and self-worth
- Common among girls and women and becoming more commonplace in boys and men

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<p><i>Physical:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Extreme weight loss</li> <li>-Thin appearance</li> <li>-Abnormal blood counts</li> <li>-Fatigue</li> <li>-Insomnia</li> <li>-Dizziness/fainting</li> <li>-Bluish discoloration of the fingers</li> <li>-Hair that thins/breaks/falls out</li> <li>-Soft/downy hair covering the body</li> <li>-Constipation</li> <li>-Abdominal pain</li> <li>-Dry/yellowish skin</li> <li>-Intolerance of cold</li> <li>-Irregular heart rhythms</li> <li>-Low blood pressure</li> <li>-Dehydration</li> <li>-Swelling of arms/legs</li> <li>-Eroded teeth</li> <li>-Calluses on the knuckles (from induced vomiting)</li> </ul> <p><i>Emotional/behavioral:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Severely restricting food intake through dieting or fasting,</li> </ul>	<p><i>Goal:</i> To get person back to and remain at a healthy weight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Involves multiple different healthcare personnel, like primary care doctor, mental health specialist, dietitian and family and friends</li> <li>-No medications to treat it</li> <li>-Talk to the doctor before taking vitamins and minerals</li> <li>-Stick to the plan, don't isolate yourself from your support system and resist looking in the mirror/weighing yourself frequently</li> <li>-Try yoga, meditation or massages to help manage anxiety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Nothing specific you can do to prevent it</li> <li>-If you are having low self-esteem, odd dieting habits and aren't happy with their appearance, speak to a doctor because the key is to catch the disease early enough that it can be prevent from advancing</li> </ul>

<p>exercising excessively, bingeing and self-induced vomiting, use of laxatives/enemas/diet aids/herbal products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Preoccupation with food</li><li>-Cooking elaborate meals for others but not eating them</li><li>-Frequently skipping meals or refusing to eat</li><li>-Denial of hunger</li><li>-Makes excuses for not eating</li><li>-Eating only a few certain "safe" foods (low in fat and calories)</li><li>-Adopting rigid meal or eating rituals (ex. spitting food out after chewing)</li><li>-Not wanting to eat in public</li><li>-Lying about how much food has been eaten</li><li>-Fear of gaining weight</li><li>-Repetitive weighing/measuring the body</li><li>-Frequent checking in the mirror for perceived flaws</li><li>-Complains about being fat or having parts of the body that are fat</li><li>-Covers up in layers of clothing</li><li>-Flat mood (lack of emotion)</li><li>-Social withdrawal</li><li>-Irritability</li><li>-Reduced interest in sex</li></ul>		
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