

If you know someone with Bulimia, you can help.

1. **Set a time to talk.** Set aside a time to privately talk about your concerns with your friend. Be open and honest. Make sure you talk in a place away from distractions.
2. **Tell your friend about your concerns.** Tell your friend about specific times when you were worried about their eating or exercise behaviors. Explain that you think these things may show a problem that needs professional help.
3. **Ask your friend to talk about these concerns.** They could talk to a counselor or doctor who knows about eating issues. If you feel comfortable, offer to help your friend make an appointment or go with her to the appointment.
4. **Avoid conflicts or a battle of the wills with your friend.** If your friend doesn't admit to a problem, repeat your feelings and the reasons for them. Be a supportive listener.
5. **Don't place shame, blame, or guilt on your friend.** Do not use accusatory "you" statements like, "You just need to eat." Or, "You are acting irresponsibly." Instead, use "I" statements like, "I'm concerned about you because you refuse to eat breakfast or lunch." Or, "It makes me afraid to hear you vomiting."

6. **Avoid giving simple solutions.** Don't say, "If you'd just stop, then everything would be fine!"
7. **Express your continued support.** Remind your friend that you care and want them to be healthy and happy

What Are Signs Of Bulimia?

People with bulimia may be underweight, overweight, or have a normal weight. This makes it harder to know if someone has this disorder. However, someone with bulimia may have these signs:

Uses extreme measures to lose weight:
~uses diet pills or takes pills to urinate or have

a bowel movement (BM)

~goes to the bathroom all the time after she eats (to throw up)

~exercises a lot, even during bad weather, tiredness, sickness, or injury

Shows signs of throwing up:

~ swelling of the cheeks or jaw area

~cuts and calluses on the back of the hands and knuckles

~teeth that look clear

Acts differently:

~is depressed

~ doesn't see friends or participate in activities as much

Bulimia



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Bulimia Nervosa

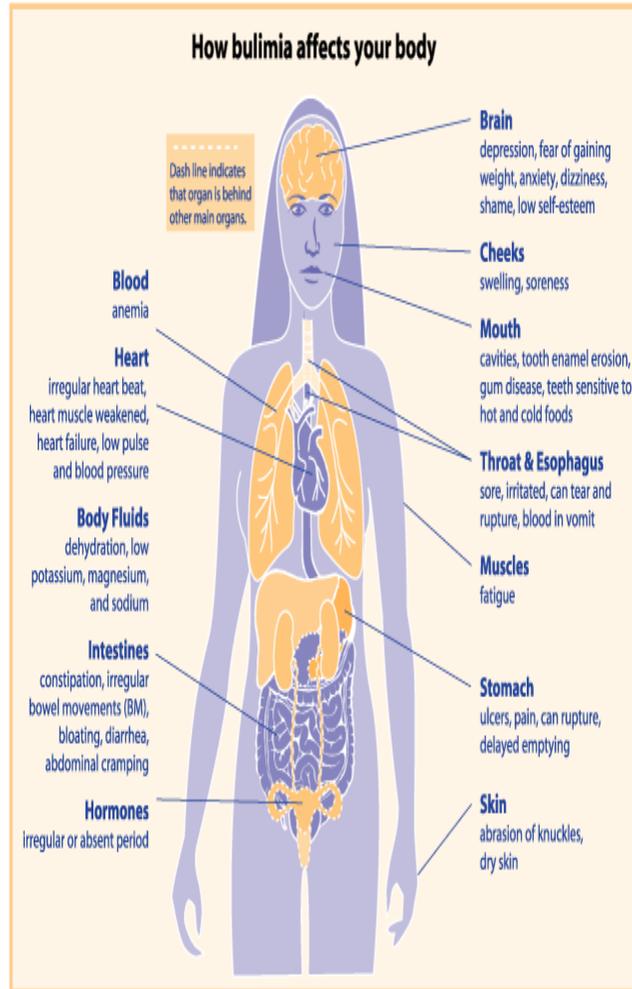
Approximately 3% of women will be affected by an eating disorder during their lifetime.

Eating disorders are not a function of will, but are rather, unhealthy eating patterns that "take on a life of their own." The voluntary eating of smaller or larger portions of food than usual is common, but for some people this develops into a compulsion and the eating behaviors become extreme.

Individuals with **bulimia nervosa** undertake binge eating and then use compensatory methods to prevent weight gain, such as induced vomiting, excessive exercise or laxative abuse. They also place excessive importance on body shape and weight. In order for a diagnosis of bulimia nervosa to be made, the binge eating and compensatory behaviors must occur, on average, at least twice a week for 3 months.

At any given time, 70% of women and 35% of men are dieting

What Happens To Someone Who Has Bulimia?



Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of all mental illnesses, with 10% to 20% eventually dying from complications

What Causes it?

Bulimia is more than just a problem with food. Purging and other behaviors to prevent weight gain are ways for people with bulimia to feel more in control of their lives and ease stress and anxiety. While there is no single known cause of bulimia, many things may have a role in its development:

- **Biology.** There are studies being done to look at many genes, hormones, and chemicals in the brain that may have an effect on the development of and recovery from bulimia.
- **Culture.** Some cultures have an ideal of extreme thinness. Women may define themselves on how beautiful they are.
- **Personal feelings.** Someone with bulimia may feel badly about herself, feel helpless, and hate the way she looks.
- **Stressful events or life changes.** Things like starting a new school or job, being teased, or traumatic events like rape can lead to the onset of bulimia.
- **Families.** The attitude of parents about appearance and diet affects their kids. Also, a person is more likely to develop bulimia if a mother or sister has it.