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**Eating Disorder**

Eating disorder is used to explain disorders which are often characterized by irregular eating habits, at the same time being seriously concerned and depressed about body weight and shape. Such disorders include insufficient or quite excessive intake of food which can further damage the health and well being of the person. Some of the common types of eating disorder are Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, and other binge eating disorder. This particular disorder can damage and affect both males and females. Such type of disorders are not specific to any particular stage of life they can occur at any stage, but it is observed that during the teen years and young adulthood such disorders take place quite often. Because in developmental stages individuals become quite possessive about their body image and appearance to fit in the society. This particular disorder is classified as a medical illness, and there are quite effective and appropriate treatments that are used to treat effectively any kind of disorder. Although this seems to be quite simple and treatable but if not addressed then the symptoms and the consequences of this disorder can be quite detrimental for the person. Normally it has been observed that an eating disorder is accompanied by other conditions like anxiety, drug use, and abuse and depression. So it is quite apparent that any type of eating disorder can cause prominent medical conditions and other emotional stresses [[1]](#footnote-1).

Although the causes of eating disorder are not known it is believed that this particular condition is a multifactorial condition and there are different causes due to which it can occur. In the development of these conditions, a combination of different psychological, environmental and biological condition contribute significantly in the progress of this disease. Biological factors are genetic, although it is not fully known and proper research should be done, it is quite apparent that the link between eating disorder and genetics is quite strong, nutritional shortages and other irregular hormone functions. Psychological factors include low self-confidence and negative image of the body. By far the psychological factors that are negative body image and low self-esteem are the strongest and most researched ones. In today's world teenagers and youngsters are the common and most frequent users of social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. By doing so, they are also exposing themselves to body bashing and negative comments, due to which their self-esteem decreases to a significant level and they become insecure about themselves which leads towards depression and mental stress. Another reason is that women who are between the age 18-25 quite often view fitspiration pictures, which leads towards higher self-objectification and concerns related to their own appearance and body shape. Most of the American youngsters spent almost two hours on social media platforms which plays a key role in exposing them to impractical standards of beauty, weight loss post and much more [[2]](#footnote-2). Other studies also suggest that increased use of Facebook and Instagram leads towards higher prevalence of eating disorder symptoms, which sheds light on the effect of social media on the psychological stability of an individual. On social media, everything is shared due to which it is now a prominent tool for influencing others and also it has placed value on the perfect body and shape in many ways. Pictures are shared frequently on Instagram and although most of the pictures are edited even then they affect the mental stability of an individual to such a level that the individual seeks for validation from others, which is measured by how many likes and comment a person gets on a particular picture that is shared on her social media handle. Selfies that are shared on social media give the message that basically our beauty and body appearance determine our worth which is a message that most of the patients who have eating disorder struggle the most. The social media users then start comparing themselves with others because it is human nature that we most often judge ourselves against others. For individuals who are at a depth of eating disorders, such comparisons can be quite detrimental as they continuously compare their body appearance with those they see on social media which further destabilizes their mental state.

Eating disorders are quite simple and easy to treat if addressed timely. Anyone who gets in an eating disorder can easily come out of it if proper treatment is given to the individual. The first and main concern is stabilizing any serious health condition that the person has. This can be done by hospitalizing the patient and then providing proper medications to the person. Providing a proper nutritional plan can also help address the issue. This can be done by consulting a dietician and nutritionist who can help the person by making an appropriate balanced diet meal plan; proper dietary goals are maintained and once this is done then a proper and healthy body weight is maintained. Counseling also includes educating the person about health and proper eating habits. Therapy is one of the signature treatments of this disorder in which the negative thoughts are controlled, and they are replaced with healthy and positive attitude [[3]](#footnote-3).

Although there are no proper medications and treatment for the eating disorder and the causes are also confusing, but if the disease is addressed on time, then it is possible that it can be treated on time before enough damage is done.

**References**

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1. “The Assessment and Treatment of Binge Eating Disorder : Journal of Psychiatric Practice®,” n.d., online, Internet, 5 Mar. 2019. , Available: https://journals.lww.com/practicalpsychiatry/Abstract/1998/07000/The\_Assessment\_and\_Treatment\_of\_Binge\_Eating.2.aspx. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Manfred M Fichter, Norbert Quadflieg, and Anna Gnutzmann, “Binge eating disorder: treatment outcome over a 6-year course” *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*. 44.3 (1998): 385–405. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Melinda, “Helping Someone with an Eating Disorder - HelpGuide.org” *https://www.helpguide.org/*. , 2 Nov. 2018, online, Internet, 5 Mar. 2019. , Available: https://www.helpguide.org/articles/eating-disorders/helping-someone-with-an-eating-disorder.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)