

# Eating Disorders

## Defining characteristics:

- persistent disturbance of eating or eating-related behavior
- impairs physical health or psychosocial well-being

## Risk Factors/Onset:

- eating disorders often during adolescence or young adulthood
- there seems to be a genetic link to being more prone to developing an eating disorder
- environmental influences also play a role

## Prevalence:

- 2.7% of 13-18 year-olds

## Disorders:

- \* **Pica** – persistent eating of non-food items
- \* **Rumination Disorder** – repeated regurgitation of food w/o nausea or gagging (not related to another eating disorder)
- \* **Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder** – food (or certain types of food) is avoided and person doesn't get total nutritional requirements. Food is not avoided because of weight fears...more to do with lack of interest in food or color/texture problems
- \* **Anorexia Nervosa** – intense fear of weight gain, distorted perception of weight/body shape, taking extreme efforts to control weight leads to impaired physical and social health. Can be life-threatening
  - o restricting type – dieting, fasting, excessive exercise as weight control method
  - o binge/purge type – eating then purging (vomiting, laxatives, enemas, etc.) as weight control method
- \* **Bulimia Nervosa** – intense fear of weight gain, eating a large amount of food in a short period of time and feeling out of control of the eating, then purging the food afterward. Can be life-threatening
- \* **Binge-Eating Disorder** – feeling of a lack of control of eating habits (eating too much, too fast, when not hungry, etc.) then feeling shame/guilt over it

## Treatment

psychotherapy – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, family therapy, group therapy  
nutrition education  
medical monitoring  
sometimes medications like anti-depressants