

# ANYONE CAN BE AFFECTED BY AN EATING DISORDER.

AN ESTIMATED 1.25 MILLION PEOPLE ARE AFFECTED BY AN EATING DISORDER IN THE UK.

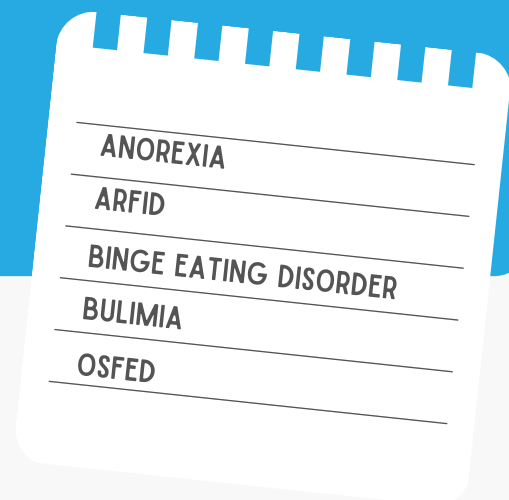


AN EATING DISORDER IS A COMPLEX MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION WHICH CAN AFFECT ANYONE OR ANY AGE, GENDER, ETHNICITY OR BACKGROUND.

There is no single cause of an eating disorder and symptoms can vary between people and type of eating disorder. People with eating disorders often use disordered eating behaviour as a way to cope with difficult situations and/or feelings.

Disordered eating can take many different forms which can include limiting the amount of food eaten, bingeing or eating very large quantities of food at once, getting rid of food eaten through unhealthy means (e.g. making themselves sick, misusing laxatives, fasting, or excessive exercise), or a combination of these behaviours.

To help find the right treatment and support, there are a number of different eating disorders that someone can be diagnosed with....



# TYPES OF EATING DISORDERS

## ANOREXIA

ANOREXIA is an eating disorder where a person keeps their body weight as low as possible. People with anorexia usually do this by restricting the amount of food they eat. They may also make themselves vomit and / or exercising excessively.

Anorexia Nervosa has two main sub-types: **Restricting type** or **Binge/Purging type**.

## BULIMIA

People with BULIMIA NERVOSA often restrict their food intake. This results in periods of excessive eating and loss of control (binge eating), after which they compensate, which may be done by making themselves vomit or using laxatives (purging).

Purging is often associated with feelings of guilt, shame as well as a fear of gaining weight.

## BINGE EATING DISORDER

A binge is an episode of excessive eating or drinking. People who binge eat very large quantities of food over a short period of time, even when they're not hungry. Binges are often planned in advance and the person may buy "special" binge foods.

Sometimes, a person will describe being in a "dazed state" during a binge (particularly at night) and are not able to remember what they ate. People who regularly eat this way are likely to have a binge eating disorder.

## OSFED AND ARFID

**Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorder (OSFED)** may present with many of the symptoms of other eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa or binge eating disorder but will not meet the full criteria for diagnosis of these disorders.

**Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder, more commonly known as ARFID**, is a condition characterised by a person who avoids certain foods or types of food entirely and/or restricted in quantity.

It is different to other restrictive eating disorders in that it is not affected by body image issues or for the purpose of losing weight and it doesn't always feature other behaviours usually associated with anorexia, bulimia, or OSFED (such as over-exercising).



# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF EATING DISORDERS

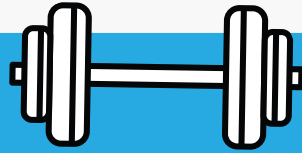


## FOOD

Have they become obsessive about food?

This could include: talking constantly about food or weight, describing foods as 'good' or 'bad'

Buying, hiding, or eating food in secret or changes in eating habits.



## MOOD & BEHAVIOUR

Is their behaviour changing?

This could include: excessive exercise, changes to energy levels (increasing tired or struggling to concentrate), more frequent trips to the bathroom (especially after mealtimes).



## BODY IMAGE

Do they have a negative body image?

Body image is how you see yourself. They may determine their self-worth by what is or is not eaten or show signs of low self esteem due to body dissatisfaction.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

EATING DISORDERS DON'T JUST AFFECT THE PERSON INVOLVED BUT THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS TOO. HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

### KEEP TALKING

Ask if things are okay, if they want to talk and how you can help. Remember your loved one is still a person and more than just their diagnosis or illness.

Try to avoid conversations around body shape and weight as this can be an extra sensitive subject for someone with an eating disorder.

### LEARN MORE

Make time to learn more about what your loved one is going through. This can help you understand their behaviour and it will let them know you care.

### BE AVAILABLE

Be there for them for when they need to talk and feel supported. Not every conversation or social needs to be about their eating disorder and it can be helpful for you both to take your minds off things!



# OUR SUPPORT SERVICES

## PEER SUPPORT

Our Peer Support is available under 18s and involves working on topics like body image, self-esteem and developing coping strategies with one of our Specialist Support Officers.

## BEFRIENDING

Our befriending service is accessible to all ages via email, telephone or video call (available to both our service users and carers.) This support is provided by our incredible team of volunteers, many of whom have their own lived experience.

## COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

A safe and understanding space to give you the time and freedom to talk. Our counsellors and psychotherapists provide 1:1 therapy to individuals aged 16 and above with eating disorders and general mental health difficulties. They are available daytime, evenings and weekends to suit you.

## WEEKLY SUPPORT GROUPS

Supported by group facilitators, our staff provide weekly Self-Help and Recovery Groups, as well as other positive activities.

## INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUPPORT (ICS)

This service is available for those with a direct referral from the NHS ED Service or CAMHS. To learn more, email [info@firststepsed.co.uk](mailto:info@firststepsed.co.uk).

**WE AIM TO EMPOWER YOU TO BE IN CONTROL OF YOUR RECOVERY THROUGH ONE-TO-ONE PROFESSIONAL AND GROUP SUPPORT AND INCLUSION IN POSITIVE ACTIVITIES.**



# GET INVOLVED

## VOLUNTEERING

Whether you're an 'expert by experience' or looking to gain a greater understanding of mental health, volunteering with First Steps ED is a great opportunity to support people in your community whilst receiving training and experience towards your degree or future employment.

## STUDENT PLACEMENTS

Our charity offers a range of opportunities to students on both psychological and Health & Social Care pathways. To learn more about any of our current placement opportunities, including counselling and psychotherapy please contact the team.  
[info@firststepsed.co.uk](mailto:info@firststepsed.co.uk)

## BEFRIENDING

We have opportunities to join our multi-award winning befriending team.

As one of our valued befriender, you will be supporting someone on a weekly basis for six to nine months (via email or video clinic.) Full ongoing training and supervision is included.

## EXPERT BY EXPERIENCE

We offer opportunities to those in the final stages of recovery, with the motivation to give back to the community and support others drawing on the knowledge learnt during their own recovery journey.

We aim to empower our service users to be in control of their recovery through one-to-one professional and group support as well as inclusion in positive activities. To learn more about how you can support us please contact our team at [info@firststepsed.co.uk](mailto:info@firststepsed.co.uk)





# RECOVERY FROM AN EATING DISORDER IS POSSIBLE.



## FOR SUPPORT

Asking for help isn't always easy but your mental health matters. Start your journey with us today and make a referral. (Referrals can either be for yourself, carer, parents, or professional support worker.)

## FOR SELF CARE

Follow us and join in with the conversation over on our social media channels where we share lots of useful advice and self care tips every week!

## FOR MORE INFO

Head over to our website for more information, including Disorders and Symptoms, how to donate and **First Steps ED** services and support.

**Phone:** 01332 367571  
**Email:** [info@firststepsed.co.uk](mailto:info@firststepsed.co.uk)  
**Social:** @firststepsed

Visit [www.firststepsed.co.uk](http://www.firststepsed.co.uk) for more information about eating disorders, support services and to make a referral.

Charity no. 1185092



[www.firststepsed.co.uk](http://www.firststepsed.co.uk)

