

# Let's Talk About Eating Disorders

The way we talk about eating disorders matters.  
Here are some facts to help you discuss them.



## **“Eating disorders are serious and can be fatal.”**

Eating disorders often involve serious medical complications that can cause permanent damage or death. People with eating disorders also have an increased risk of dying by suicide.



## **“Eating disorders are caused by a variety of factors.”**

Several factors can increase a person's risk of developing an eating disorder, including biological, psychological, and social factors. An eating disorder is not a lifestyle choice.



## **“Eating disorders can affect anyone.”**

Eating disorders do not discriminate. They affect people of all ages, races, ethnicities, and genders.



## **“You can't tell if someone has an eating disorder by looking at them.”**

People with eating disorders can be underweight, average weight, or overweight.



## **“Family members can be a patient's best ally during treatment.”**

Family members can encourage a family member with eating or body image issues to seek help and provide support during treatment.



## **“It is possible to recover from an eating disorder.”**

Recovery is possible with treatment and time.



National Institute  
of Mental Health

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NIMH Identifier No. OM 24-4317