



OSBORNE CAWKWELL  
PRIVATE TUITION

## Eating Disorders

**Eating disorders encompass a range of conditions that tend to be characterised by a fear of food.**

For some people, focussing on food can be a way of masking underlying problems such as low self-esteem, negative body image or struggles with perfectionism.

Although serious, eating disorders are treatable and full recovery is possible, although as with most mental health issues, it can often be a lengthy process.

### Main types of Eating Disorder:

- ✨ **Anorexia** – A condition where individuals self-induce weight loss through limiting the amount of food they eat, forcing themselves to vomit, and exercising excessively. It usually develops out of anxiety towards the way their body looks, whether it be fear of being too fat, or wishing they were thinner.
- ✨ **Bulimia** – Similar to anorexia, in that a person is trying to control their weight, but with bulimia, sufferers tend to binge on large quantities of food, then purge it from their body by forcing themselves to be sick or taking laxatives.



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## Statistics:

- ✧ Around 1 in 250 women and 1 in 2,000 men will experience anorexia at some point. It typically develops around the age of 16 or 17.
- ✧ Bulimia is five times more common than anorexia and 90% of people with bulimia are female. It usually develops around the age of 18 or 19.

## Signs and Symptoms:

- ✧ Missing meals, eating very little, or avoiding eating any fatty foods
- ✧ Leaving the table immediately after eating so they can vomit
- ✧ Taking appetite suppressants or laxatives
- ✧ Obsessively counting calories in food
- ✧ Feeling lightheaded, dizzy or having dry skin
- ✧ Repeatedly weighing themselves or checking their body in the mirror

## Treatment for Eating Disorders:

The first step in treating an eating disorder is to visit your local GP, where they will carry out an assessment. Your GP will refer you to an eating disorders specialist, who will help come up with a suitable care plan.

This typically comprises a combination of therapy, in order to help reframe the way the individual views themselves, and an individualised diet/nutrition plan, to help get the body back to a normal, functioning state.

It's also very common for eating disorders to be accompanied by depression and anxiety, which is often the root cause.

The following **self-help strategies** can be beneficial in helping to treat these underlying conditions



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alongside clinical intervention:

- ✦ **Growth mindset**
- ✦ **Social support**
- ✦ **Being present**
- ✦ **Practicing gratitude**
- ✦ **Diet/Exercise**

If you would like to know more, please download our guide on the “**Five Ways to Wellbeing**”.

## Further information:

### Beat

One of the largest charities involved in helping people overcome eating disorders. They have a website with lots of information about eating disorders and an anonymous talk line.

Tel: 0808 801 0711

### Anorexia & Bulimia Care

Another excellent charity offering information for those suffering from anorexia or bulimia. They also have an anonymous talk line with an option for family and friends who are concerned about someone they know.

Tel: 03000 11 12 13