



Resource: A checklist to assist in identifying eating disorders

- Psychological/ Emotional Indicators
- Feelings of lack of control in life
- Increased mood changes, such as anxiety, depression, irritability, moodiness, frustration, sudden emotional outbursts, passivity
- Strained or changed relationships
- Difficulty in expressing emotions or asserting self appropriately
- Unrealistic standards or expectations of self and/or others
- Low self-esteem, including inability to recognize own positives, unhealthy need for approval, hypersensitivity to criticism
- Guilt or self-dislike
- Poor quality of life
- Obsessive behaviours
- Suicidal thoughts or behaviour
- Concern or preoccupation with weight or certain parts of the body
- Distortions in perception of shape/ size
- Fear of fat or weight gain
- Use of unhealthy weight loss practices, such as laxatives, diuretics, steroids or supplements
- Anxiety around meal times
- Preoccupation with “good” and “bad” foods
- Frequent weighting or “body checking” behaviour
- Anxiety about missing exercise

Behavioural warning signs and indicators

- Comparing self with others unfavourably
- Problems relating to others, such as arguments or passive behaviour
- Impaired functioning/ achievement in academic or vocational capacity
- Concentration difficulties
- Changing in clothing style/ dress
- Difficulty sleeping
- Changes in social interaction, such as avoidance or loss of interest
- Decreased interest in hobbies
- Drug and alcohol misuse

- Dieting, fasting, overeating
- Talking about body/ food/ recipes/ different diets a lot of the time
- Binge eating and/ or purging; trips to bathrooms after meals
- Very slow or fast eating
- Rearranging food on the plate
- Hoarding food
- Avoiding eating and situations involving eating
- Increased interest in preparing food for others
- Exercising despite injury, illness, extreme heat
- Obsessive rituals, such as only drinking out of a certain cup, eating certain foods on certain days
- Suicide attempts

Physical warning signs or indicators

- Significant and often sudden weight loss or weight fluctuations/ cycling
- Dizziness or black outs
- Low blood pressure, arrhythmias (irregular heart beat) or bradycardia (slow heart beat)
- Fatigue or inability to progress in their fitness program
- Sensitivity to the cold (complaining about being cold, wearing a jumper on warm days OR wearing skimpy clothes during the cold)
- Abdominal problems, such as pain, cramps, indigestion, bloating, nausea, constipation
- Amenorrhoea or irregular menstrual periods in females
- Loss of or limp, dry hair
- Dry skin and nail problems
- Easy bruising
- Sore throats, enlarged parotid (throat) glands
- Oral/ dental problems; bad breath
- Russell's sign (scrapes on knuckles from purging)
- Distinctive 'chipmunk' look from swollen glands
- Lanugo (fine body hair)
- Changes in physiological indicators, such as cholesterol, uric acid, cortisol and liver enzymes
- Electrolyte disturbances (low potassium, phosphate, magnesium and protein)