

# Eating Disorders

Adapted from Utah Sports Medicine Curriculum

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## OBJECTIVES/RATIONALE

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Eating disorders are increasing at an alarming rate with potentially life threatening consequences. The student will understand eating disorders and the factors which may contribute to their onset and development

TEKS 115.32(b)(1)(B,C,D), (2)(A)

TAKS ELA 1

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## KEY POINTS

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- I. Eating Disorders
  - A. One out of every 150 American females ages 12-30 years will develop an eating disorder. Statistically athletes are at a greater risk.
  - B. 1/3 of all Americans are obese and 60% are overweight.
  - C. 77% of individuals with eating disorders report that the illness can last anywhere from one to fifteen years or even longer in some cases.
  - D. Anyone with an eating disorder is at risk for death.
  - E. The mortality rate for eating disorders is approximately 20%. Death is usually due to a “side effect” of the disorder, i.e. cardiac arrest or kidney failure.
  - F. Long-term, irreversible consequences of eating disorders may affect one’s physical and emotional health. Only 50% of all people with eating disorders report being “cured”.
  - G. 10% of all people with eating disorders are male.
  - H. The typical person with an eating disorder
    - 1. Perfectionist
    - 2. Obedient
    - 3. over-compliant
    - 4. highly motivated
    - 5. successful academically
    - 6. well liked
    - 7. good athlete.
  - I. Eating disorders are associated with a distorted body image and a feeling of loss of control. The eating disorder is not about food, but a way to exert control over something in their lives.
  - J. Signs to look for include:
    - 1. Social isolation.
    - 2. Lack of confidence in performance.
    - 3. Ritualistic eating behaviors, such as cutting food into small pieces and playing with it.
    - 4. Obsession with calories.

5. Obsession with weight.
6. Distorted body image.
7. Wearing layers of baggy clothing to hide thinness.
8. Nervous at mealtime, avoidance of eating in public.
9. Patterns of leaving the table directly to go to the bathroom.
10. Running water in the bathroom after meals to hide the sound of vomiting.
11. Significant weight loss.
12. Obsession with grades.
13. Obsession with organization of personal space.
14. High emotions; tearful, uptight, overly sensitive, restless.
15. Signs of malnutrition.
16. Menstrual irregularities.
17. Loss of hair.
18. Light-headedness.
19. Blood-shot eyes.
20. Inability to concentrate.
21. Chronic fatigue.
22. Compulsive exercising.
23. Decrease in performance.
24. Recurrent overuse injuries and stress fractures.
25. Depression.

II. Anorexia Nervosa

A. The following definition is used by the American Psychiatric Association:

1. Intense fear of gaining weight or becoming fat, even though they are already under-weight.
2. Distorted body image (i.e., claiming to “feel fat” even when emaciated), with an undue influence of body weight or shape on self-perception.
3. Weight loss to less than 85% of normal body weight.
4. Refusal to maintain body weight over a minimal normal weight for age and height.
5. Denial of the seriousness of the current weight loss.
6. Absence of at least three consecutive menstrual cycles.

B. Anorexia is a life-threatening condition.

III. Bulimia Nervosa

A. The definition used by the American Psychiatric Association includes:

1. Recurrent episodes of binge eating, characterized by both of the following:
  - a. Eating an unusually large amount of food in a discrete period of time (the amount eaten is larger than most people would eat during a similar time period and under similar circumstances).
  - b. Feeling out of control during the eating episode and unable to stop eating or control what and how much is eaten.

2. Purging - compensating for the food binge to prevent weight gain,
    - a. inducing vomiting
    - b. misusing laxatives
    - c. enemas or other medications
    - d. fasting
    - e. exercising excessively.
  3. Binge eating and purging, on average, at least twice a week for three months.
  4. Evaluating self-worth according to body shape and weight.
- B. Many individuals with anorexia will also develop symptoms of bulimia.
- C. Bulimic behavior can cause
1. stomach rupture
  2. tooth erosion
  3. inflammation of the mucous lining of the mouth and throat
  4. can eventually cause heart and liver damage.
- IV. Compulsive Eating
- A. A large percentage of individuals with eating disorders are compulsive eaters.
- B. A compulsive eater keeps eating beyond the time when hunger has been satisfied. Eating is driven by anxiety, fear, frustration, or anger, rather than by hunger or even pleasure.
- C. Compulsive eaters do not eat for pleasure.
- D. Weight does not indicate compulsive eating.
- V. “Bigger-exia”
- A. Describes individuals who use steroids and other ergogenic aids to build muscles. They are compulsive and excessive about body building workouts.
- B. These individuals see extreme size as something to aspire to.
- C. Many health problems are associated with the use of steroids.
- VI. Medical Conditions
- A. Eating disorders are extremely dangerous.
1. In serious cases the body suffers from heart and kidney damage, stomach rupture, urinary infections, and osteoporosis.
  2. Menstrual irregularities and difficulties are also common in women with eating disorders.
- B. Any victim of an eating disorder must be approached and handled extremely carefully. Referral for medical treatment is essential!
- C. Individuals who are truly anorexic or bulimic commonly deny the problem, insisting that they’re perfectly fine.

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## ACTIVITIES

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- I. Complete the Eating Disorders Questionnaire.

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## MATERIALS NEEDED

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### Eating Disorders Quiz - KEY

<http://www.eating-disorder.org/ed.html>

<http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org>

Case Studies

<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1984/5/84.05.05.x.html#f>

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## ASSESSMENT

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### Eating Disorders Quiz

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## ACCOMMODATIONS

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For reinforcement, the student will collect pictures from magazines and newspapers that advertise, glorify or exploit dieting, body image, and/or thinness.

For enrichment, the student will complete a case study on a celebrity suffering from an eating disorder.

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## REFLECTIONS

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## EATING DISORDERS QUIZ

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1. List at least 10 signs to look for in someone with an eating disorder:
    - 1.
    - 2.
    - 3.
    - 4.
    - 5.
    - 6.
    - 7.
    - 8.
    - 9.
    - 10.
  2. T F At least 10% of all people with eating disorders are male.
  3. T F Often, eating disorders are not really about food at all but rather a way for the person to exert control over something in their lives.
  4. Describe Anorexia:
  5. Describe Bulimia:

6. Describe Compulsive Eating Disorder:

7. Describe Biggerexia:

8. T F Eating disorders are extremely dangerous.

9. T F People with eating disorders commonly admit that they have a problem.

## EATING DISORDERS QUIZ - KEY

- List at least 10 signs to look for in someone with an eating disorder:
  - **Social isolation**
  - **Ritualistic eating behaviors**
  - **Obsessions with weight**
  - **Wearing layers of baggy clothing**
  - **Go directly to bathroom after eating**
  - **Running water to hide vomiting**
  - **Obsession with personal organization**
  - **Signs of malnutrition**
  - **Loss of hair**
  - **Blood shot eyes**
  - **Chronic fatigue**
  - **Decrease in performance**
  - **Depression**
  - **Lack of confidence**
  - **Obsessions with calories**
  - **Distorted body image**
  - **Avoid eating in public**
  - **Significant weight loss**
  - **Obsession with grades**
  - **High emotions**
  - **Menstrual irregularities**
  - **Light-headedness**
  - **Inability to concentrate**
  - **Hyperactivity**
  - **Recurrent overuse injuries**
- T** F At least 10% of all people with eating disorders are male.
- T** F Often, eating disorders are not really about food at all but rather a way for the person to exert control over something in their lives.
- Describe Anorexia:
  - **Intense fear of gaining weight and becoming fat although they are already under-weight; distorted body image; weight loss to less than 85% of normal body weight; refusal to maintain weight; denial of seriousness of the situation; absence of at least three consecutive menstrual cycles.**
- Describe Bulimia:
  - **Recurrent episodes of binge eating and purging by inducing vomiting, misusing laxatives, enemas, or other medications, fasting, or exercising excessively; at least 2 episodes per week for 3 months; evaluating self-worth according to body shape and weight.**
- Describe Compulsive Eating Disorder:
  - **Keeps eating beyond the time when hunger has been satisfied; eating is driven by fear, anxiety, frustration, or anger rather than by hunger or pleasure; may also be a compulsive dieter; it is the relationship to the food that determines whether or not a person is a compulsive eater.**
- Describe Biggerexia:
  - **Compulsive and excessive about body building workouts; use of steroids or other ergogenic aids to build muscles; view extreme size as something to aspire to rather than an exaggeration.**
- T** F Eating disorders are extremely dangerous .
- T** **F** People with eating disorders commonly admit that they have a problem.

## EATING DISORDERS QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire will give you an indication of whether or not you are living a lifestyle that indicates anorexic and/or bulimic tendencies. Answer the following questions honestly. Write the number of your answers in the space at the left.

- \_\_\_ 1. I have eating habits that are different from those of my family and friends.  
1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never
- \_\_\_ 2. I find myself panicking if I cannot exercise as I had planned for fear of gaining weight.  
1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never
- \_\_\_ 3. My friends tell me I am thin but I don't believe them because I feel fat.  
1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never
- \_\_\_ 4. (Females Only) My menstrual period has ceased or become irregular due to no known medical reasons.  
1 – True 2 – False
- \_\_\_ 5. I have become obsessed with food to the point that I cannot go through a day without worrying about what I will or will not eat.  
1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never
- \_\_\_ 6. I have lost more than 15 percent of the normal weight for my height (e.g. 30 lbs., from 120 lbs.)  
1 – True 2 – False
- \_\_\_ 7. I would panic if I got on the scale tomorrow and found out I had gained two pounds.  
1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never
- \_\_\_ 8. I find that I prefer to eat alone or when I am sure no one will see me, thus I am making excuses so I can eat less and less with friends.  
1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never
- \_\_\_ 9. I find myself going on uncontrollable eating binges during which I consume large amounts of food to the point that I feel sick and make myself vomit.  
1 – 3 or more times per day 2 – 1 to 2 times per day  
3 – 1 to 2 times per week 4 – Rarely 5 – Never
- \_\_\_ 10. I use laxatives as a means of weight control.  
1 – Almost always 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. I find myself playing games with food (e.g. cutting it up into pieces, hiding food so people will think I ate it, chewing it and spitting it out without swallowing) telling myself certain foods are bad.

1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. People around me have become very interested in what I eat and I find myself getting angry at them for pushing food on me.

1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. I have felt more depressed and irritable recently than I used to and/or have been spending increasing amounts of time alone.

1 – True 2 – False

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. I keep a lot of my fears about food and eating to myself because I am afraid no one would understand.

1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. I enjoy making gourmet, high-calorie meals or treats for others as long as I don't have to eat any myself.

1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. The most powerful fear in my life is the fear of gaining weight or becoming fat.

1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. I find myself totally absorbed when reading books about dieting, exercising, and calorie counting to the point that I spend hours studying them.

1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. I tend to be a perfectionist and am not satisfied with myself unless I do things perfectly.

1 – Almost always 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. I go through long periods of time without eating anything (fasting) as a means of weight control.

1 – Often 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. It is important to me to try and be thinner than all of my friends.

1 – Almost always 2 – Sometimes 3 – Rarely 4 – Never

Add your scores together and compare with the table below: \_\_\_\_\_ my score

Under 30 Strong tendencies toward anorexia nervosa

30 – 45 Strong tendencies toward bulimia

45 – 55 Weight conscious, not necessarily with anorexic or bulimic tendencies

Over 55 No need for concern

If you scored below 45, it would be wise for you to seek out some kind of help or assistance.