

Eating Disorder - Bulimia

Bulimia Nervosa is an eating disorder caused by a person's feelings of low self-esteem, worthlessness and depression. They view themselves as being fat and overweight, which causes them to resort to bizarre eating habits in order to lose weight. The bulimic will binge eat and then purge. This habit after awhile becomes addictive and they fall into a pattern of bingeing as a way to cope with their negative feelings about themselves. The bulimic binge consists of a large amount of food intake with a high calorie count, usually eaten in private away from other people. They will eat sweets and foods high in fat. Although some binges are planned, most are spur-of-the-moment, being triggered by an emotional outburst of a happening in their life that sinks them into a depression. They use food as a comfort, stuffing themselves and then vomiting. This practice can happen several times a day. The eating binge tends to have a numbing effect on their feelings, with a feeling of anger toward themselves shortly afterward. They are ashamed of their actions and realize they have lost control, which further contributes to their feelings of low self-esteem. This feeling of shame causes them to be reluctant to admit their problem to anyone and to seek help for their condition. The self-induced vomiting is done to compensate for their binges. They are relieved of the full feeling from eating too much food and expect the vomiting to prevent any weight gain from the binge. They also use laxatives, enemas, diet pills, fasts and extreme exercise in order to prevent weight gain. In some cases they will chew their food and then spit it out without swallowing it, thinking this will prevent any weight gain. Like the anorexics, bulimics feel their self-worth is determined by the shape of their body. They constantly weigh and measure their body, needing to keep track of any possible weight gain. Even though they may be nothing but skin and bones, to view themselves in a mirror, they see themselves as fat. Cardiovascular problems such as a slow pulse and low blood pressure are caused by the bulimia condition. Even dental problems can occur such as highly sensitive teeth, pyorrhea, bleeding gums and tooth loss. Dry skin is fairly common and lower body temperature is experienced which causes shivering. These are some of the medical complications caused by the malnutrition; not to mention the risk of death. Will power is not a cure for the bulimia illness. The bulimic exhibits self-destructive behavior, so it is necessary to work with the individual on an individual basis to teach them ways of coping with life, instead of using food as a means of coping. The eating disorder has been used as a means of survival against the problems in their life they have encountered. Thus, professional help is needed to evaluate what each individual's problems are and how to overcome these self-perceived feelings of low self-esteem and worthlessness. In our society today, there's a lot of emphasis put on having the perfect body and for someone who has the idea their body does not measure up to what is considered perfect, then this is when an eating disorder may develop. Eating disorders are caused by a mindset and that thinking has to be dealt with before any chance of a recovery can be accomplished. Early diagnosis and treatment are highly recommended for someone showing signs of an eating disorder. Dry hair and skin, a yellowing of the skin, brittle nails and weight loss are signs to look for in a person. Also, wanting to eat alone indicates there could be some kind of problem. It must be noted this illness can become quite serious and lead to death, if left untreated.

About the Author

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