

Where to Find Help

Appalachian State University offers a number of services for those suffering from disordered eating as well as their friends and loved ones. Any of the following resources may be contacted to provide advice, information, and/or support.

Counseling and Psychological Services Center

Miles Annas Student Services Building
828-262-3180

Individual and Group Psychotherapy,
Psychoeducational Programming, Consultation
www.counseling.appstate.edu

Wellness Center

Miles Annas Student Services Building
828-262-3148

Nutrition Counseling
www.wellness.appstate.edu

Health Services

Miles Annas Student Services Building
828-262-3100

Medical Evaluation and Psychiatric Consultation
www.healthservices.appstate.edu

Eating Concerns Treatment Team

Counseling and Psychological Services Center
828-262-3180

Assessment, Consultation, and Treatment
Planning

Workshops

Staff from The Counseling Center are available to prepare a presentation/discussion on eating disorders, body image, self esteem or any other topic that relates to your campus group.

Just call the Counseling Center at 828-262-3180 to request such a program. We will arrange a workshop that fits the unique needs of your group.



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Eating Concerns Information & Resource Guide



Counseling and Psychological Services Center

Miles Annas Student
Services Building

828-262-3180

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Almost everyone worries at some time about their weight, appearance, body image, and size, but people with eating disorders deal with these worries in a more exaggerated form. Their lives revolve around their fear and/or obsession with food and their weight. They feel out of control and try to keep their eating behavior a secret from friends and family.

Should you be concerned?

Answer the following questions for yourself or for someone for whom you are concerned, answering each along the following continuum:

Never: 0 Sometimes: 1 Often: 2 Always: 3

1. Do you think about food and body size constantly, so that you feel controlled and defined by it? _____
2. Do you eat large amounts of food, so that you feel out of control and cannot stop? _____
3. Do you think you are overweight, even though others say you are thin? _____
4. Is your weight/shape the most important factor in how you feel about yourself? _____
5. If you eat one cookie, do you condemn yourself, conclude the day is ruined, and continue eating a whole binge? _____
6. Do you keep a running count of calories or fat grams in your head all day? _____
7. Do you eat (or not eat) without knowing whether you are hungry or full? _____
8. Are you convinced that if you gain one pound, you'll continue gaining indefinitely? _____
9. Do you scrutinize and criticize your body or body parts every day? _____
10. Do you find it difficult or impossible to eat in front of other people? _____
11. Do you push yourself to exercise to burn calories? _____
12. Do you make yourself vomit after eating, or use laxatives or diuretics in order to control your weight? _____
13. Do you severely restrict your food intake or diet, in part to lose weight, but also to feel in control? _____
14. Do you eat in secret, hide food, or lie about your eating? _____
15. Do you feel guilty about your eating behavior? _____

Add up your answers to determine your score:

- 1-10 Look at your answers carefully, it may be time to make some changes
- 11-25 You seem to be struggling with your eating/body image and may need some help
- 26-35 Your eating/body image seems unhealthy and you definitely should seek professional help for yourself

Symptoms of an Eating Disorder

Eating disorders can include some combination of the signs and symptoms of anorexia, bulimia, and/or compulsive overeating

Anorexia

- Significant weight loss
- Restrictive dieting
- Feeling fat, even after losing weight
- Intense fear of weight gain or fat
- Preoccupation with food, calories, fat grams, nutrition, or cooking
- Compulsive exercise
- Dressing in layers to hide weight loss/perceived fat
- Perfectionistic attitude
- Feelings of self worth dependent on weight
- Loss of menstrual period

Bulimia

- Eating uncontrollably
- Eating in secret, hiding food
- Lying about food intake
- Bathroom visits after meals
- Vomiting, laxative or diuretic abuse
- Overexercising
- Frequent weight fluctuations
- Swollen glands, puffy cheeks, heartburn, tooth decay

Binge Eating Disorder

- Periods of uncontrolled, impulsive, or continuous eating beyond the point of feeling comfortably full
- Periods of shame after a binge
- Repetitive diets or sporadic fasts

Remember, along with dysfunctional eating habits and poor body image, emotional symptoms often include:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Withdrawal
- Loneliness



Contributing Factors

The reasons people develop eating disorders are numerous, complex, and vary by person. A combination of psychological, interpersonal, social, and biological factors typically contribute to the development of disordered eating habits.

While eating disorders seem like a food and weight problem, they are better understood as feeling problems. That is, people use food and eating to cope with feelings and situations that seem overwhelming and unmanageable.

Psychological Factors

- Low self-esteem
- Feeling a lack of control of one's life
- Depression, anxiety, anger, or loneliness
- Setting standards for oneself that are unrealistic and rigid
- Evaluating one's sense of worth based on external factors (weight, grades, etc.)

Interpersonal Factors

- Troubled family and personal relationships
- Difficulty expressing self to others
- History of being teased because of weight or appearance
- History of sexual or physical abuse

Social Factors

- Media images and cultural standards that glorify thinness and place value on having the "perfect body"

Biological Factors

- Certain chemicals in the brain that control hunger, appetite, and digestion are imbalanced

How to Help

The shame and secrecy associated with eating disorders make it difficult for people to ask for help. However, the majority of people can recover from an eating disorder, especially if they are treated by a trained clinician. The best treatment involves a multidisciplinary team comprised of a therapist, nutritionist, a medical professional, and sometimes a psychiatrist.

Helping Yourself

Psychotherapy can help you develop healthier coping mechanisms, increase self esteem, and work through those issues that contribute to your disordered eating habits. You might also:

- ★ Ask yourself, "What am I feeling?" "What isn't working?" "What do I need that I'm not getting?" Write in a journal.
- ★ Remind yourself of your strengths, talents, skills, things others like about you, etc.
- ★ Call a friend who knows about your problem and have him/her just listen.
- ★ Teach yourself a new hobby or start a project.
- ★ Get enough rest and treat yourself well.
- ★ Expand positive relationships and let go of negative ones.
- ★ Leave environments that trigger disordered eating, especially when you feel frustrated, under pressure, stressed, or bored.
- ★ Take deep breaths, close your eyes, picture yourself in a field or on a beach or participate in other methods of relaxation like exercise, yoga, and meditation.
- ★ Allow yourself not to be perfect. Forgive yourself for mistakes.

(adapted from materials by the National Eating Disorders Association)

Helping a Friend

If you suspect someone may have a problem, it is essential that you show him or her that you are concerned. You may be worried that confronting a friend may make him or her angry, but they will recover from the anger. They may not recover from the eating disorder without your intervention.

Here are some helpful hints:

- ★ Meet with the person privately and share your concerns with them, pointing out specific behaviors and observations. Keep the focus on your friend's health, not weight or appearance.

- ★ Allow the person to talk and be prepared for resistance. Leave yourself open as a supportive listener and continue to express your concern.
- ★ Avoid placing blame or guilt on the individual.
- ★ Encourage the person to talk to a professional (therapist, nutritionist, medical professional) who understands the issue. Offer to accompany your friend on his or her first visit.
- ★ If you are feeling frustrated with your attempts to help a friend, seek support and advice from the Counseling Center.

Eating Concerns Treatment Team

About the Eating Concerns Treatment Team

The Eating Concerns Treatment Team (ECTT) offers specialized services for individuals with eating and body image issues. ASU utilizes a multidisciplinary approach to treatment in order to most effectively address the dietary, medical, and emotional/psychological aspects of an eating concern.

Our providers are skilled, caring professionals including physicians (general and psychiatric), physician assistants, psychologists, counselors, and a registered dietitian. Using this multidisciplinary team approach, we provide the following services:

- Assessment of eating concerns
- Medical evaluation by a physician or physician assistant.
- Individual and/or group therapy sessions by therapists trained in this area
- Nutrition counseling by a registered dietitian
- Psychiatric consultation

Who can Benefit?

- Students of any gender who struggle with eating and/or body image can receive ECTT services.
- Concerned friends or family can utilize the ECTT as a referral, for information, and/or consultation.
- ASU faculty and staff can utilize the ECTT as a referral, for information, and/or consultation.

The Coordinator

The ECTT Coordinator is housed in the ASU Counseling Center and serves as the central contact person for the eating concerns client, members of the treatment team, and concerned family, friends, or faculty/staff.

Questions, concerns, referrals, and requests for more information should be directed to the ECTT Coordinator at 828-262-3180.

To Make an Appointment

To initiate services with the ECTT, please visit the Counseling Center during Walk-In Clinic hours. During this initial appointment, you will be referred for a consult with the ECTT Coordinator. Depending on your health care needs, the Coordinator will schedule your appointments with a medical provider, dietitian, and/or Counseling Center staff member.

Counseling.appstate.edu



For an online screening for eating disorder, click on "Take a Screening."

