

Bulimia

Bulimia is a serious eating disorder, which involves the misuse of food to try to resolve emotional difficulties. The major symptoms are binge eating followed by self-induced vomiting or 'purging'. It is also quite common for a bulimic to abuse laxatives and diuretics. Purging may occur several times a day, often after each meal.

One of the major signs of someone suffering from bulimia is regularly disappearing to the lavatory immediately after meals. A bulimic may also be very secretive about food and unwilling to discuss it, or frequently want to eat alone and isolate. Other symptoms and indicators are the erosion of dental enamel due to acid in the vomit, swelling of the glands near the cheeks, a depressed mood and frequent complaints of sore throats and abdominal pain.

Bulimia is, however, a condition which exists in a frame of rage, guilt and shame, and sufferers are frequently very skilled at masking symptoms. Bulimia can thus often go on for many years without becoming apparent to others. This is because the sufferer's weight usually remains relatively constant, and outwardly there may be no sign that anything is wrong; they are 'hidden in plain view'.

Although outward symptoms are often subtle and/or concealed, bulimia has severe physical consequences: frequent bingeing and purging will cause electrolyte imbalance and dehydration, and vomiting can lead to low levels of essential salts in the body. This can cause weakness in the muscles, kidney problems and heart problems. Acid from the stomach also erodes the tooth enamel.

People who suffer from bulimia usually have a very low self-esteem and are conflicted in how much and what they are allowed to receive. They may also place a lot of importance on their image, weight and appearance about which they are deeply insecure. A bulimic is preoccupied with food intake, and generally feels she/he is very overweight, although in fact is usually near a normal weight. Bulimia frequently occurs together with other psychiatric disorders such as depression and substance dependence.

Bulimia is often a way for some people to feel a form of control over their emotional lives. At other times the bulimic vomiting becomes a sufferer's only way to communicate rage, pain and a need for help. When a person is incapable of facing feelings, defining problems, and resolving them effectively, that person is more likely to become susceptible to the onset of bulimia.

When someone has been vomiting regularly and for a long time, the body becomes used to rejecting food. It takes time and careful therapeutic management to change the bulimic's entangled relationship with food and its control to a healthy one.

It is possible to recover from bulimia and break free from the vicious cycles of bulimic behaviour; baby steps.

If you think you suffering with Bulimia then give us a call, we can help

Call 020 7323 4970

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