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College Students and Eating Disorders [brochure and video]

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Where to Turn for Help

Seeking help for an eating disorder can be extremely difficult, but finding a great support group would be great place to start. Then seeking treatment, and counseling would be your next step.

If you have friend who is suffering from an eating disorder, remember that the best thing you can do is be a source of support and strength .

If you are a Western Kentucky University student you can use the following resources. If you are not a WKU student, you can contact your campus counseling center.

WKU Counseling and Testing Center

Potter Hall 4th Floor

270 745 – 3159

WKU Health Services

270 745 - 5641

Resources Used

Reynolds, A. L. (2009). *Helping college students: Developing essential support skills for student affairs practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Timberline Knolls Residential Treatment Center. (2011). *Eating disorder symptoms and effects*. Retrieved from http://www.timberlineknolls.com/eating-disorder/signs-effects

Walden Behavioral Care. (2011). *Eating disorders among college students*. Retrieved from http://citationmachine.net/index2.php?reqstyleid=2&mode=form&reqsrcid=APAWebPage&more=yes&nameCnt=1

Western Kentucky University Counseling and Student Affairs Program

College Students and Eating Disorders

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What is an Eating Disorder?

College students face pressure from all different directions while in college. Pressures to perform academically and pressure from their peers in social environments. Some even feel pressure from parents, coaches, and the media about being “attractive” or thin. According to our research, this is can lead a student to develop an eating disorder.

One misconception about eating disorders is that they only happen to women, but men can also suffer from eating disorders. The two most common eating disorders are anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa (Reynolds, 2011).

Anorexia sufferers go without eating , because they have the perception that they are overweight, even if they’re not.

Bulimia suffers will eat large amounts of food, and then throw the food back up. This is referred to as binging and purging. (Walden Behavioral Care, 2011)

How Does this Effect College Students?

“91% of female college students have tried to control their weight through dieting” (Walden Behavioral Care, 2011)

“A study by Mintz and Betz reported that almost 60 percent of college women display some type of disordered eating such as excessive dieting or exercising, binging and purging, or overeating“ (Reynolds, 2009).

Warning Signs of Eating Disorders

Anorexia:

“Abnormal weight loss.
Drastic decrease in eating, saying they aren’t hungry. Decrease in eating foods with high fat and carbohydrate content.
Continuing to exercise when tired or weak
Intense fear of weight gain.” (Timberline Knolls Residential Treatment Center, 2011)

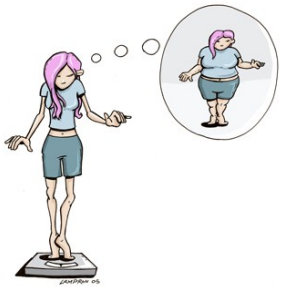
Bulimia:

“Displays extreme concern over their weight, and in addition to bingeing and purging, they often take laxatives or diuretics to aid them in losing weight.
Eating patterns will vary between fasting and binges.
When binging, the food has a high calorie content.
May become depressed after a binge session.” . (Timberline Knolls Residential Treatment Center, 2011)

Side Effects of Eating Disorders

Someone who is suffering from an eating disorder will see many changes when it comes to the functioning of their bodies.

Anorexia suffers will see changes in the way their hair and nails grow. They can suffer from extreme fatigue and dizziness. All of these side effects stem from their body not receiving enough nutrients. (Timberline Knolls Residential Treatment Center, 2011)

Bulimia suffers will see changes in the way their body digests food. They will develop what is often called “chipmunk cheeks.” This is caused because of swollen salivary glands. Heartburn is also a common side effect, because of binging and purging. (Timberline Knolls Residential Treatment Center, 2011)

It is common for both Anorexia and Bulimia sufferers to have irregular menstrual cycles. (Timberline Knolls Residential Treatment Center, 2011)