FIRST STEPS ED

Registered Charity 1185092
@FirstStepsED

A leading eating disorder charity providing hope, opportunities, and choices to lives affected by poor body image, eating difficulties and eating disorders.



Anyone can be affected by an eating disorder. Support is available with or without diagnosis. If you need advice or support, we're here to help.

DONATE

To make a referral or download our latest resources visit:

www.firststepsed.co.uk

For other enquiries:

info@firststepsed.co.uk
01332 367571



Our Community

Follow the conversation over on our social media channels where we share lots of useful information, advice and self care tips every single week!

@firststepsed

Anyone can be impacted by an eating disorder. You are not alone.

In this guide:

- Signs and symptoms
- Diagnosis and key terms
- Finding support
- First Steps ED Services

What is poor body image?

Body image is how we view our physical appearance. Throughout life, most people will experience moment where they don't feel 100% happy with their body. For others, body image can bring up a lot of different feelings and emotions which can be difficult to cope with. If these thoughts become more frequent and increasingly negative, it can begin to deeply effect mental health and wellbeing.

What is an eating problem?

An eating problem is any relationship with food that you find difficult or negative impacts your life, and an eating disorder is a complex mental health condition, which can affect people of all ages, genders, culture or background. There is no singular cause, and they can present in a number of different ways.

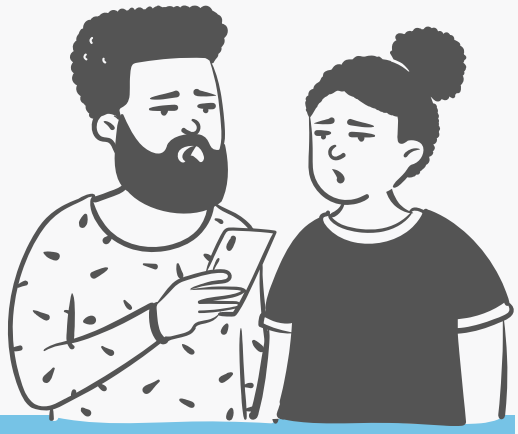
Signs & Symptoms

Recognising the signs and symptoms is important for effective early intervention and prevention. If you're worried about yourself or a loved one, **get in touch.**

At First Steps ED, we believe that support should be available for all those affected by eating difficulties and disorders, including family, carers, parents and support professionals.

Eating difficulties and disorders can vary from person to person.

Eating disorders do not have a look, nor does someone need an official diagnosis to be struggling and in need of support. Possible early signs associated with eating disorders include:



food	Have they changed around mealtimes? This might be more frequent conversations around food, dieting and/or their weight or shape etc.
flips	How has their behaviour changed? They may appear to be more irritable or anxious, as well as denial that there is a problem.
feelings	Is their self-worth determined by their size or what they have eaten? Do they have distorted views about their body, weight or shape?
focus	Are they more tired than normal? They may appear to be taking more naps, unable to concentrate on certain tasks or struggling to sleep at night.
fade	Have they started to hide food, or disappear to the toilet after meals? Are they isolating themselves socially or avoiding occasions which involve food?
fitness	Has their attitude to exercise changed? Could any new behaviours be described as excessive in the way it impacts their routine and day-to-day life?

To help find the right treatment and support, it's important to familiarise yourself with the types of eating disorders.

Anorexia Nervosa

...is an eating disorder where a person keeps their body weight as low as possible, usually through restricting the amount of food they eat. They may also make themselves vomit and / or exercising excessively. Anorexia Nervosa has two main sub-types: Restricting type or Binge/Purging type.

Binge Eating Disorder

A binge is an episode of excessive eating or drinking. Binges are often planned in advance and the person may buy "special" binge foods. Sometimes, it may feel as though you're in a "dazed state" during a binge and are not able to remember the episode. People who regularly eat this way are likely to have a binge eating disorder.

ARFID

Avoidant **R**estrictive **F**ood **I**ntake **D**isorder (**ARFID**) is a condition characterised by individuals who avoid certain foods or food groups either entirely or is restricted in quantity (eating small amounts). It is different to other restrictive eating disorders in that it is not affected by body image issues or for the purpose of losing weight.

Bulimia Nervosa

... is when an individual will often restrict their food intake, resulting in periods of excessive eating and loss of control (binge eating), after which they compensate, which may be done by making themselves vomit or using laxatives (purging). Purging is often associated with feelings of guilt, shame as well as a fear of gaining weight.

OSFED

Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorder (OSFED) may present with many of the symptoms of other eating disorders listed here, but won't meet the full criteria for diagnosis.

Support is available, and the sooner we can manage those symptoms and difficult feelings the greater chance of a sustained recovery.

No diagnosis? No problem. Our services are available to people with or without an official diagnosis from a GP.



Struggling with eating difficulties or poor body image? Support is available.

Body image concerns can develop from an early age and be endured throughout our lives. You are not alone in how you're feeling, but it is important to remember that our differences are what makes us unique. **The world need who you were made to be.**

In our 'Understanding Body Image' series of resources, we explain exactly what body image is and how it can affect the way we think, feel and behave. We will also explore how we can begin to create a kinder relationship with our bodies.

- **The Basics**

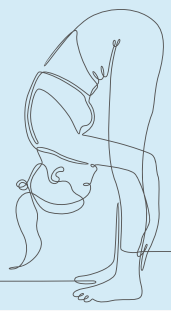
  In guide one, we define body image and equip you with some key facts, statistics and the science behind it.

- **Causes and Consequences**

  The following guide delves a little deeper to discuss how the media, weight stigma, trauma, childhood (and much more!) can influence our body image.

- **Support and Self Care**

  Finally we review self care techniques and resources that could help you on your journey towards acceptance and recovery.



Essential intervention. Offering a lifeline to individuals in recovery.

We aim to empower individuals and families to be in control of recovery through one-to-one professional and group support as well as inclusion in positive activities.

Support for children and young people

Working as both a stand alone service and in in partnership with other local services, we help provide a variety of support options and signposting for families and their children. Following assessment, service users can access support including:

- CBT-T (evidence-based one-to-one support for eating disorders)
- Psycho-education Groups
- Befriending (15+)

Skills for Carers

Our 'Skills for Carers' workshops are full of practical tips, scenarios and case studies, designed to help carers develop self-reflective, care-giving skills to role model confidence, compassion and courage.

The aim is to offer parents, carers and siblings the knowledge and ability to be an important part of supporting a loved one.

NHS Integrated Community Services

Working closely as a pathway provider with Adults (A-CEDS) and CAMHS (CYP-CEDS) NHS community eating disorders service teams, our approach to eating disorder recovery is proven to help people to get better and stay better. Through a stepped-care plan alongside our NHS partners we offer one-to-one support, focusing on reducing isolation and regaining life skills to enable them to thrive in their hobbies and passions.

Counselling & Therapy

A safe, non-judgemental and understanding space to give you the time and freedom to talk. Our counsellors and psychotherapists provide 1:1 therapy to individuals aged 16 and above with eating disorders.

Workshops & Groups

Our groups offer a safe and secure space for service users to share their own experiences and engage with others who might be in a similar situation. Participation will give attendees new skills, information and insight to help them identifying triggers and establishing new strategies and coping mechanisms.

Befriending

Befriending is our multi-award-winning 6-to-9-month weekly support programme, recognised by NHS England's National Integrated Personal Commissioning Team. We match a service user with one of our highly trained and supervised befrienders who volunteer to provide ongoing support through email up to twice a week and video clinic/telephone calls up to once a week. Befriending can provide flexibility and a level of anonymity, giving you the control of your own recovery

Full recovery from an eating disorder is possible.



Support is available with or without diagnosis. If you need advice or support, we're here to help. Referrals can either be for yourself, carer, parents, or professional support worker.
Start your journey at www.firststepsed.co.uk

Not quite ready?

It can take time to reach out for support and finding the confidence to speak to someone. Our website and resources are here for whenever you need it.

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Skills for Eating Disorder Support (CPD accredited)

Each course demonstrates a range of information and support tools which can be adopted in various professional settings. Each of our trainers are experienced in the delivery of our courses and provide confidence in organisations and individuals who choose our 'Skills for Eating Disorder Support' training programme.

For more information about our courses visit www.firststepsed.co.uk/training

Contact us today to learn more about:

- Private Counselling
- School Workshops
- Train-the-Trainer
- Volunteer and Placement Opportunities

Self Help & Community Support

Follow the conversation over on our social media channels where we share lots of useful information, advice and self care tips every week!

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Asking for help isn't always easy but your mental health matters.

