



STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL'S SPARK PROGRAM



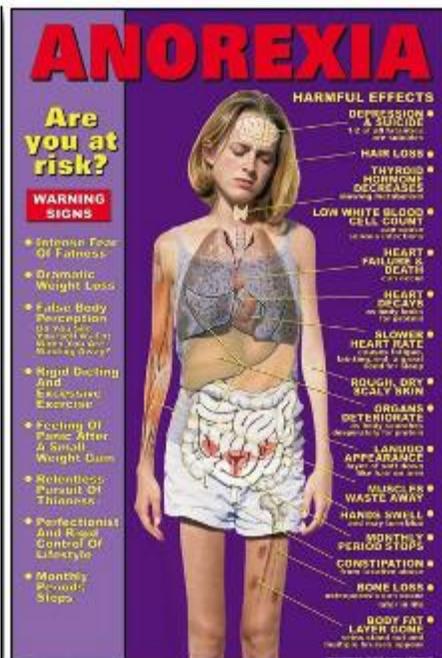
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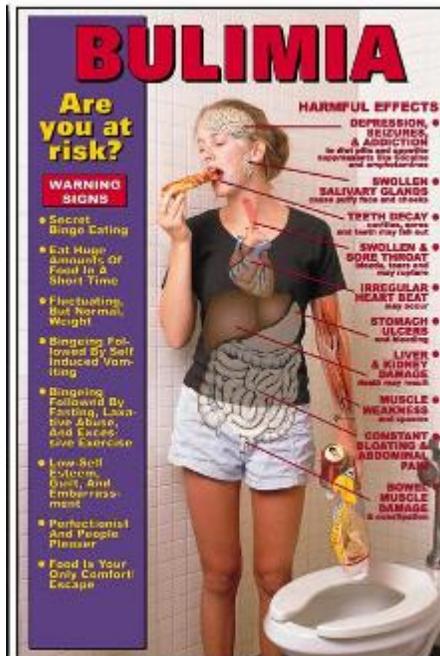
“WARNING SIGNS OF AN EATING DISORDER”

- **Anorexia (self-starvation) can be fatal.**
- **Bulimia (bingeing and purging) can ruin teeth, cause serious heart problems and permanently damage major organs in the body.**
- **Compulsive overeating can lead to obesity.**
- **Only a medical professional can actually diagnose an eating disorder. But you can know these warning signs, and if you notice them in a friend, you should notify an adult.**
- **If you notice them in yourself, get help ASAP. Tell a parent, tell your doctor, tell a teacher or school counselor.**
- **For more information, please visit www.nationaleatingdisorders.org or call toll-free 1 800 931 2237.**



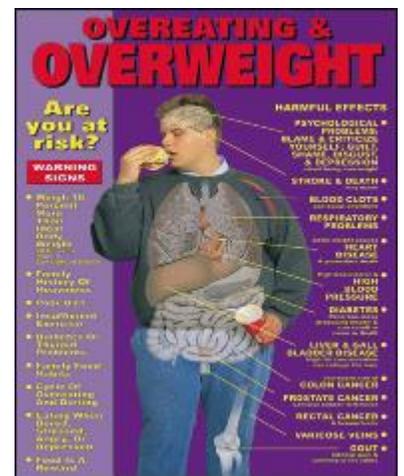
- (1) **Sudden, abnormal weight loss or weight gain.**
- (2) **Eats a lot less than usual, or eats a lot more than usual.**
- (3) **Diets all the time, even when thin or at a normal weight.**
- (4) **Has a distorted body image – feels “too fat” even when thin.**
- (5) **Exercises excessively (too much) or compulsively (can’t stop).**
- (6) **Is obsessed with weight; is terrified of gaining weight.**

- (7) **Always counts calories and food grams; always reads labels on food packages; refuses to eat foods with fats in them; drinks diet beverages all the time.**
- (8) **Abuses laxatives, diuretics (for water loss), diet pills, supplements, and “natural” diet aids.**
- (9) **Often makes excuses not to eat (i.e. “Oh, I just ate, I am not hungry, I don’t like that – I’ll eat something later etc.”).**



- (10) **Leaves the table during meals; spends time in the bathroom right after eating; runs the water to mask any sounds; vomits after eating.**
- (11) **Acts weird around food; eats only certain types of food; chews food then spits it out before swallowing; skips meals or takes only tiny portions; acts “disgusted” with food; eats only “safe” foods; will only eat from a certain plate or bowl; cuts food into tiny pieces; chews every bite the same number of times; keeps moving food around the plate; cooks for others but won’t eat the food.**
- (12) **Refuses to eat around other people; avoids public places i.e. restaurants, eateries.**
- (13) **Eats in secret; gorges on food when alone; hides food; has a lot of empty food packages and wrappers.**

- (14) **Is moody, irritable, secretive, sad, cranky, touchy, and/or tired all the time; has dramatic mood swings.**
- (15) **Starts wearing very loose – fitting, baggy clothing or very tight-fitting revealing clothing.**
- (16) **Uses lots of negative self-talk (i.e. “I’m a pig!” “I’m a loser!” “Everyone hates me!”); has poor self-esteem.**



- (17) **Constantly complains about being “fat, huge or obese”; talks constantly about food and weight; is jealous of others who are thin and vows to be like them.**
- (18) **Claims that being thin will change his or her life (“I’ll feel better about myself when I’m thin,” “People will like me more when I’m thin.”)**
- (19) **Obsesses about his or her body; hates it or parts of it; spends a lot of time in front of the mirror or refuses to look at a mirror.**
- (20) **Withdraws from or avoids friends and family.**
- (21) **Lies about eating; feels ashamed of or guilty after eating.**
- (22) **Cuts himself/herself or hurts self in other ways.**
- (23) **Has physical signs of a problem – i.e. loss of hair, tooth decay, dry skin, rashes, cold hands, constant sore throat or fine hair growing on the face or body.**
- (24) **Will deny that anything is wrong.**



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“DO’S & DON’TS” FOR HELPING A FRIEND WHO MIGHT HAVE AN EATING DISORDER



- (1) **“DO”** know the warning signs.
(See Warning Signs of an ED sheet)

(2) **“DO”** learn as much as you can about eating disorders. For quick access to information, check out these websites.

- Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders www.anred.com
- Eating Disorder Referral and Information Center www.edreferral.com
- National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders www.anad.org
- National Eating Disorders Association www.nationaleatingdisorders.org
- Something Fishy (yeah I know, funny name but a great website) www.somethingfishy.org



- (3) **“DO”** be compassionate. That way, you are less likely to be judgmental. Nobody chooses to have an eating disorder. Nobody wants to be sick or obsessed with weight and food.
- (4) **“DO”** be honest. Tell your friend that you are concerned and explain why. Talk in private – don’t confront your friend in front of a group. Don’t lecture or blame. Use “I-language,” not “U-language.”

- (5) **“DO”** encourage your friend to get help. Suggest that he or she tell a parent, see a doctor or talk to a school counselor.
- (6) **“DON’T”** be surprised if your friend denies having a problem or tells you to mind your own business or tries to pick up a fight with you.
- (7) **“DON’T”** promise not to tell anyone else. **“DON’T”** threaten to end your friendship if your friend won’t change his or her behavior or get help.
- (8) **“DO”** tell someone if your friend won’t. Tell a teacher, the school counselor, the school nurse or another adult you trust. **Keep telling until someone promises to help.**



- (9) **“DO”** be aware of your own attitudes about food, weight and body image. If you’re obsessed about your own weight, if you’re always dieting, if you think that thinness is something to strive for, you won’t be much help to your friend – and you won’t be very believable.
- (10) **“DON’T”** associate food or weight with how your friend looks.”
- (11) **“DON’T”** turn into the food police. Don’t monitor what your friend eats or doesn’t eat. Don’t constantly ask your friend if he or she is eating more (or less), or eating healthy foods, or drinking fewer diet colas. Don’t try to convince your friend to eat differently. Don’t get into power struggles over your friend’s eating.



- (12) **“DO”** stick with your friend during the recovery process. Be there and be encouraging, even when your friend has a setback or seems frustrated or wants to give up.
- (13) **“DON’T”** give up on your friend or get discouraged. Be patient. Recovering from an eating disorder takes time and a lot of effort.
- (14) **“DO”** be realistic. Know your limits. You’re not your friend’s doctor or therapist. You didn’t cause your friend’s problem and you can’t solve it on your own. You’re not responsible for his/her success or failure.



You can’t force your friend to change his or her behavior or even to get help. What you can do is be aware, be there, be supportive and make sure that at least one trusted adult knows the situation.



“It took me a long time not to judge myself through someone else’s eyes.”

– Sally Field, Entertainer & Activist