

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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Eating disorders are common but complex

Eating disorders are common and take many forms, such as anorexia, bulimia, or binge eating.

Experts believe that a number of physical, psychological, cultural, and social factors contribute to the development of an eating disorder. Eating disorders are more common in teenage girls and young women, but they can occur at any age and in both sexes.

Eating disorders increase a person's risk of other health problems related to a poor diet. These can include dehydration, malnutrition, menstrual period changes, thinning of the bones (osteoporosis) and, in severe cases, heart and other organ problems.

It can be frightening to realize that someone you care about has an eating disorder. If you think a friend or loved one has an eating disorder, you can:

- Talk to your friend or loved one. Tell the person that you care and why you are worried.
- Urge them to talk to someone who can help, like a doctor or counsellor. Offer to go along.
- Tell someone who can make a difference, like a parent, teacher, counsellor, or doctor.

The sooner your friend or loved one gets help, the sooner they will be healthy again.

Help is available if you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder. You can get more information by calling Health Link at 811 or the Mental Health Helpline at 1-877-303-2642.