

# Eating disorders research paper sample

[Health & Medicine](#), [Body](#)



## **Introduction**

An eating disorder is a condition that is characterized by problems in an individual's eating behavior. An eating disorder could involve over eating, lack of eating or unhealthy feeding such as stuffing. Therefore, eating disorders can be referred to as serious conditions related to food and body weight. There are different types of eating disorders that affect human beings. They include bulimia nervosa, anorexia nervosa and binge eating disorder. Eating disorders have become a major problem in society today because the number of people affected has shot up since the turn of the century. Eating disorders are known to cause life threatening problems and serious physical problems. Most eating disorders have been recorded among female people. However, binge eating disorders affect male and female people in equal measure. Eating disorders can be treated or prevented using several ways. This can be achieved using family counseling, psychotherapy, nutrition education, hospitalization and medication.

## **Bulimia Nervosa**

This eating disorder is characterized by purging and bingeing. The individual consumes abnormally large amounts of food within a short time. Soon afterwards, the individual attempts to get rid of some calories through excessive body exercise or vomiting. Such individuals are always normal or at times overweight. Mostly, the affected people live in over-controlling families where meals are fixed. Similarly, research indicates that this eating disorder also affects sexually abused people. There is also a chance that is genetic because it affects related people with anorexia.

The symptoms of bulimia nervosa include consumption of a lot of food then purging. Purging includes practices such as excessive exercise, induced vomiting, fasting and use of laxatives. Such individuals exhibit low levels of self-esteem, distorted body image, unhealthy body weight and shape. They also have swollen cheeks because of swollen salivary glands; they appear dehydrated and cannot control their eating habits. Bulimia nervosa victims could also be drug and alcohol abusers. Finally, they exhibit irregular heartbeats, amenorrhea, damaged gums and teeth and have sores in the mouth and throat.

The treatment of bulimia nervosa involves focusing on the restoration of good health first. The next stage of the treatment process is to ensure the individual maintains a normal and healthy eating pattern. The diet given to such a patient must always be tailored to address the underlying health issues. The patients may also need counseling and guidance to ensure they get back their self-confidence. However, people affected by this disorder are always willing to seek medication because the symptoms are very evident.

### **Anorexia nervosa**

This is an eating disorder that affects people in the same controlling family where there is no nurturance. Sexual abuse victims and first degree relatives are likely to suffer from this disorder. Affected individuals have an obsession with food and being slim. Such people can starve themselves to death. The symptoms of anorexia nervosa include self-starvation, fear of growing fat, distorted self-image, too much body exercise, irritability, low emotions and social withdrawal. Such patients also suffer lack of sleep, irregular menstrual cycles, and abdominal pains, dry skin, constipation and slim body size. Due

to all these symptoms, the individual appears emaciated.

Over 90 percent of people diagnosed with this disorder are female. The affected persons feel believe that they are over-weight when actually they are normal. This disorder can be treated in stages. The first stage of treatment is to help the patient improve their individual health. This is because victims are normally in poor health due to lack of proper feeding habits. When the person's health is restored to normalcy, they should be put under the care of a therapist. Therapy would be helpful in ensuring that the person maintains normal feeding habits. Any faulty thoughts that could lead to distortion of the body image will also be avoided.

Therefore, anorexia nervosa is treatable if discovered in its early stages. The disorder can cause severe physical defects or even death if left unattended. Patients always fear seeking treatment because they fear losing control of their body size and weight. Such individuals should be put in hospital as inpatients so that it is easy to keep tabs on them.

## **Binge-eating disorder**

This is characterized by excessive eating then purging. It is characterized by eating till one feels pain, eating while alone, depression and eating quickly. This disorder leads to low self-esteem and poor health due to poor eating habits.

## **Causes of eating disorders**

Some are biologically passed from parents to their offspring. For instance, serotonin occurs naturally as a chemical in the brain. It influences eating behavior and can be passed from parent to child. Society is also a major cause

of eating disorders because many people today view slim people as beautiful. This makes people prefer being thin hence; they become victims of eating disorders. Finally, the disorders could be a result of emotional and psychological health problems such as impulsive behavior, self-esteem, troubled relationships or perfectionism.

Eating disorders could lead to complications such as heart problems, organ failure, death, depression, suicidal behavior, amenorrhea, digestive complications and low or high blood pressure.

## **Conclusion**

Therefore, eating disorders are severe conditions that result from biological, emotional, psychological and society's influence. They influence the individual's eating habits and could lead to severe health complications and in some cases death. Eating disorders can be treated using different methods such as family counseling, hospitalization and medication, nutrition education and psychotherapy.

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