

# Understanding and Preventing Eating Disorders

## INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS



N.B.: This is a tool to help parents observe and recognize the signs of an eating disorder in their children; it does not constitute a medical diagnosis in any way. If you are worried about your child's health, see a doctor as soon as possible.

### Eating Disorder (ED)

There are 3 main eating disorders that can be diagnosed:

- > Anorexia nervosa
- > Bulimia
- > Binge-eating disorder

*A child or teenager may still have an unhealthy relationship with food or be excessively preoccupied with their body or foods even if the signs and symptoms manifested don't exactly correspond to one of those disorders.*

### Signs and symptoms

#### ANOREXIA NERVOSA

##### > Behavioural

- > Avoiding family meals
- > Irritability, mood swings
- > Obsession with food: cooking videos, meal preparation, cookbooks
- > Overly involved in preparing/planning meals
- > Dietary restrictions: avoiding certain foods

##### > Physical

- > Hair loss
- > Weight loss or interruption of weight gain
- > Lack of energy
- > Absence of menstruation
- > Sensitivity to the cold, extremities slightly blue



## BULIMIA

### > Behavioural

- > Isolation
- > Eating between meals
- > Food stash in the bedroom or a hidden spot
- > Unusual consumption of large amounts of food in a short period of time
- > Signs of vomiting in the toilet/bedroom of the child/teenager
- > Skipping meals or avoiding certain meals in particular

### > Physical

- > Stable weight, weight loss or interruption of weight gain
- > Marks on the hands (if vomiting)



## BINGE-EATING DISORDER

- > The signs and symptoms are identical to bulimia but there is no use of laxatives, excessive physical exercise, or vomiting.

*The physical symptoms of bulimia and binge-eating are not as clear as those of anorexia; yet, those disorders still cause severe psychological distress and can lead to health problems.*

If you believe your child or teenager has an eating disorder, here are some useful resources:

- > ANEB Québec: <https://anebquebec.com/en>
- > Douglas: <https://ciusss-ouestmtl.gouv.qc.ca/en/douglas-mental-health-university-institute/>
- > Tel-Jeunes (french only): [https://www.teljeunes.com/Tel-jeunes/Tous-les-themes/Ca-va-pas/Troubles-alimentaires?gclid=CjwKCAiA78aNBhAlEiwA7B76pz7Bw34UacsugAcu\\_uSqlKcDD8nRoLsX-OHk7TDbf9T30x8mgS26NB0C4zcQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.teljeunes.com/Tel-jeunes/Tous-les-themes/Ca-va-pas/Troubles-alimentaires?gclid=CjwKCAiA78aNBhAlEiwA7B76pz7Bw34UacsugAcu_uSqlKcDD8nRoLsX-OHk7TDbf9T30x8mgS26NB0C4zcQAvD_BwE)
- > Fondation Jeunes en Tête: <https://fondationjeunesentete.org/en/our-tools/>
- > LigneParents (french only): [https://www.ligneparents.com/LigneParents/Tous-les-themes/Sante-mentale/Troubles-alimentaires?gclid=CjwKCAiA78aNBhAlEiwA7B76p8h\\_qbbQBd0qVPtj6FkKGE70Vz0qSBwKYyMaj5drFgeUzWQ\\_Ld3h2BoCcY4QAvD\\_BwE](https://www.ligneparents.com/LigneParents/Tous-les-themes/Sante-mentale/Troubles-alimentaires?gclid=CjwKCAiA78aNBhAlEiwA7B76p8h_qbbQBd0qVPtj6FkKGE70Vz0qSBwKYyMaj5drFgeUzWQ_Ld3h2BoCcY4QAvD_BwE)

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