

Three Things to Know About Disordered Eating

Their names may be similar, but “eating disorders” and “disordered eating” are not the same. Eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia and binge eating disorder actually are distorted eating habits often related to emotional problems. Disordered eating refers to behaviors like restrictive dieting or bingeing that are less severe than a full-fledged, diagnosed eating disorder.

Disordered eating is still serious, however. Keep the following in mind:

- Disordered eating patterns tend to be symptoms of serious distress. Food itself is rarely the primary problem.
- Early detection is crucial. The sooner the person gets help, the better the chance for permanent recovery.
- Help is available. Team treatment from a registered dietitian, physician, psychotherapist and family counselor usually provides the best results.