

EATING DISORDERS

GUIDANCE FOR ATHLETICS AND RUNNING



This guidance gives advice about spotting the signs of eating disorders and when to signpost people to local community eating disorders service for specialist support.

Eating disorders can affect anyone. The stereotype that someone with an eating disorder is a young, white, underweight female, is dangerous as can result in other people being missed, e.g. males or those who are a healthy weight or overweight. Getting treatment earlier can make a positive difference in someone's recovery, therefore it is vital to keep an open mind when thinking about who may be affected and act quickly if you suspect an eating disorder.

What to do next

It can be difficult to know what to do if you're concerned that someone has an eating disorder. People with an eating disorder are often secretive and defensive about their eating and their weight, and they may deny being unwell.

Let them know you're worried about them and encourage them to see a GP. Advise them to take a friend or family member with them. You can also signpost them to some of the organisations listed at the end of this guidance document.

If you are not sure how to bring your concerns up with the person, phone your local Community Eating Disorder Service for advice. They can give you helpful tips.

- **Don't wait and see what happens. Early help is VERY important.**
- **You are not expected to be an expert – just someone who knows the person and is worried.**

Spotting the signs

Outside the club/group:

- Have they changed their behaviours around food?
- Are they exercising more than usual?
- Are they avoiding exercise or avoiding getting changed in front of peers?
- Are they avoiding eating with others?
- Are they going to the bathroom a lot after eating, often returning looking flushed?

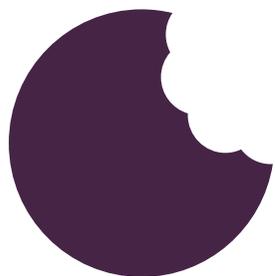
In the club/group:

- Are they becoming withdrawn at training?
- Do you think they have lost or gained weight?
- Do their performances have a bigger impact on their mood or how they view themselves?

Other:

- Are friends or family expressing concerns?
- Are they isolating themselves from their friends?
- Are they commenting more on their own body and appearance?
- Are they lying about how much and when they have eaten, or how much they weigh?

Know the first signs?



Lips

Are they obsessive about food?



Flips

Is their behaviour changing?



Hips

Do they have a distorted beliefs about their body size?



Kips

Are they often tired or struggling to concentrate?



Nips

Do they disappear to the toilet after meals?



Skips

Have they started exercising excessively?

Support and information from Beat

Beat is the UK's eating disorder charity. We are a champion, guide and friend for anyone affected by an eating disorder.

- Visit [Beat Eating Disorder](#) for information about eating disorders, and to access online support groups and one-to-one chat.
- Use [Beat Help Finder](#) to find services in your area.

Help for adults

Helpline: 0808 801 0677

Email: help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Help for young people

Youthline: 0808 801 0711

Email: fyp@beateatingdisorders.org.uk



 @BeatEDSupport

 BeatEDSupport

 [beat.eating.disorders](https://www.facebook.com/beat.eating.disorders)

Other useful links

Anorexia and Bulimia Care (ABC)

National eating disorders organisation with over 30 years experience

BAsem Health 4 Performance

The British Association of Sport and Exercise Medicine

Disordered Eating in Athletes online module

Online course from Loughborough University

Mind

Advice from the national mental health charity

The NHS

Advice from the National Health Service website

Priory Healthcare Athlete Support Pathway

Advice and support from UKA

Train Brave

Campaigning to raise awareness of eating disorders

