

Let's Talk about: Eating Disorders



ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL
COMMUNITY FORUMS

What is an Eating Disorder?

An eating disorder is a diagnosis that occurs along a spectrum. At one end is Anorexia Nervosa, with a person restricting oral intake to the point of starvation. At the other end of the spectrum is Bulimia Nervosa, an illness associated with uncontrolled eating and loss of this extra food with vomiting, exercise or laxative abuse. In between these two extremes, people may experience a combination of these symptoms. All patients with eating disorders experience preoccupation with their weight and place emphasis on weight and shape to determine their self worth.

Eating Disorders by the Numbers:

- Anorexia Nervosa occurs in 1% of the young female population.
- Bulimia Nervosa occurs in 3-10% of young women.
- Anorexia and Bulimia can occur in males but it is much less common.
- In BC more than 15,000 females and 1500 males suffer from Anorexia
- Bulimia affects 45,000 females and 4500 males in BC.
- The average time for recovery from an eating disorder is long, 7 years for anorexia and 10 years for bulimia.
- Eating disorders start early in life, commonly during adolescence and early adulthood, affecting a person's ability to form relationships, complete education and pursue goals
- Of every 100 adult patients with Anorexia Nervosa
 - 40-45 will recover
 - 25 will partially recover
 - 25 will have a life long problem with Anorexia
- Of every 100 adult patients with Bulimia Nervosa
 - More than 50 will recover
 - 30 will partially recover
 - 20 will have ongoing eating problems
- Approximately 50% of patients with Anorexia will go on to develop symptoms of Bulimia over the course of the illness
- The mortality due to Anorexia Nervosa is high, usually 10-15%. It has the highest mortality

rate of all psychiatric illnesses.

- Depression, Anxiety and Substance Use Disorders are common in patients with eating disorders

Eating Disorders can be a medical emergency.

- Very low weight
- Severely abnormal blood tests: low potassium, low magnesium, low blood sugar
- Abnormal heart tests: slow heart rate or other changes on ECG
- Suicidal thoughts or behaviors

Signs of an Eating Disorder:

- Significant weight loss or fluctuations
- Changes in eating patterns including frequent dieting, fasting, avoidance of certain food that may be considered "bad"
- Avoidance of eating with others
- Unusual behavior after eating including weighing self, spending excessive time in the bathroom, exercise
- Preoccupation with exercise
- Altered perception of self image; e.g. very thin but sees herself / himself as over weight.
- Noticeable physical symptoms including fatigue, fainting, palpitations, muscle cramping
- Changes in function at school or work

Risk Factors You Can't Control

- Family history
- Age
- Gender
- Unexpected life stressors

Risk Issues You Can Work On

- Self esteem
- Peer relations
- Family relations
- Help for depression, anxiety and substance abuse
- Cultural images and influences

Join medical experts from Providence Health Care for monthly community forums at St. Paul's Hospital. Each month features a different health topic with time to pose questions to the experts.

The forums are free and take place the third Wednesday of every month.

7:00 – 9:00 pm
(doors open at 6:30)
New Lecture Theatre
St. Paul's Hospital
1081 Burrard Street

For more information and to register, please email ownyourhealth@providencehealth.bc.ca or call 604-806-8495. Light refreshments will be served.

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Sponsored by:



Eating Disorder treatment and research at St. Paul's Hospital

A unique provincial resource, Providence Health Care provides complete care for British Columbians with eating disorders.

Just as important as the high-quality care we provide is our teaching and research mandate that helps us better understand this condition, improve patient care and develop new treatment solutions.

Highlights of care, research and innovation:

- St. Paul's Hospital Provincial Specialized Eating Disorders Program provides highly specialized care for patients with severe eating disorders living in the province of BC.
- The Eating Disorders Program is a provincial resource that sees 150 new patients for assessment each year. The majority of patients assessed are followed in the program being treated in inpatient, residential and outpatient settings.
- Our dedicated inpatient unit is unique and provides the highest level of care for patients from the entire province.
- Our collaborative model of care involving Internal Medicine and Psychiatry provides comprehensive medical care for the needs of our patients.
- Our multi-disciplinary treatment team includes nursing, nutrition, occupational therapy, pastoral care, psychology, recreation therapy and social work. Our team members work with patients in hospital and in the community.

Outreach:

- Support through education and consultation services for the entire province.
- Active research in our program directed at

improving patient care in BC and beyond

Components of program:

- Comprehensive assessment and treatment planning
- Dedicated 7 bed inpatient unit to treat patients with severe illness, living anywhere in BC, who require hospitalization and specialized care
- Day treatment program with residential component with 8 spots
- Outpatient services include:
 - Educational groups for patients and their family and friends
 - Outpatient treatment groups
 - Medical and psychiatric care
 - Psychological support for pregnant and postpartum women and patients with Diabetes
 - Collaborative clinic for patients with complex and long standing eating disorders
- Partnership with community resources including regional programs and the Community Outreach Partnership Program

www.phcmedicine.ca

St. Paul's Hospital is an acute care, teaching and research hospital located in downtown Vancouver. It is home to many world-class medical and surgical programs, including heart and lung services, HIV/AIDS and kidney care.

St. Paul's serves both the local community and patients from across BC and the Yukon. St. Paul's is one of 14 health care facilities in Vancouver operated by Providence Health Care, one of Canada's largest faith-based health care organizations. Providence's 1,000 physicians and 6,000 staff deliver compassionate care to patients and residents in British Columbia while training medical professionals and making innovative advances in research.

To support programs like this at St. Paul's, please visit www.helpstpauls.com to make a donation to the Department of Medicine Academic Fund.

This evening's presentations and future presentations will be available to view on our website, thanks in part to the generous support of: