eating disorders

**Some of the signs and symptoms of disordered eating:** feeling out of control around food, feeling obsessed about food, changes in behaviour, weight gain or weight loss, eating faster than usual, struggling to concentrate, tiredness.

**I am worried about someone. What shall I do?**

* Offer practical help- go with them to an adult who they feel they can talk to about their problem
* Share with them this leaflet or BEAT Helpline
* Involve them in the same things you would have before you have known they struggle with eating
* Try to find activities that do not centre around food

**What are eating disorders?**

Eating disorders are complex mental health issues with no single cause. Eating disorder’s symptoms may change over time or some people may not have all the symptoms to be diagnosed with one eating disorder. In this case people are diagnosed with OSFED- other specified feeding or eating disorders. The most common eating disorders are: OSFED, Binge Eating Disorder, Bulimia Nervosa and Anorexia Nervosa.

**Who can they affect?**

Anyone can suffer from an eating disorder regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity or background.

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**What can I do if I struggle with my relationship with food?**

* See your GP. It is a challenging but crucial step to receive professional help.
* Speak to an adult who you trust (in or outside of school).
* Read more about eating difficulties on BEAT website and access their chatrooms or call their helpline to find out more about support.
* Book appointment with local eating disorders charity First Steps ED.

**BLAST – distractions (adapted from BEAT website)**

It is worth having a list of distractions whenever you feel **B**ored, **L**onely, **A**ngry, **S**tressed or **T**ired to help you ease difficult emotions in healthier way than using eating disorder behaviours.

* If you are feeling **Bored**, you can go out for a walk, read or watch something. You can call someone or clean your bedroom.
* If you are feeling **Lonely**, you can get in touch with your friends or family members. You may also create the list of people you could contact. Finally, join online support groups/ chatrooms on BEAT website.
* If you are feeling **Angry**, you can write your feelings down and reflect if you could talk to someone about your anger. You may also try to express you anger in creative way by writing, painting or in physical way by squeezing a ball or punching a pillow.
* If you are feeling **Stressed** you can think about what causes you stress. Reflect if there is anything you can do about it or if anyone could help you. Try meditation, breathing exercises or play with your pet if you have one.
* If you are feeling **Tired** make sure you have a good sleeping routine. Find activity that is absorbing and calming, e.g. journaling.

**Further support**

BEAT Helpline **0808 801 0677**

BEAT Email [help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk](mailto:help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

Samaritans 116 123

**Useful websites**

[www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

[www.firststepsed.co.uk](http://www.firststepsed.co.uk)

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

[www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)