Disordered Eating Resources at Georgia Institute of Technology

Many college students at one time or another have concerns about their eating habits. Academic stress coupled with being away from home can often throw off a person's eating habits. Sometimes, this can cross the line and become an eating disorder.

Eating disorders affect both men and women and can become emotionally consuming, with long-term physical and psychological consequences. Georgia Tech recognizes the need to help students with disordered eating and has established an Eating Disorder Treatment Team to address these needs.

This brochure provides some general information on eating disorders and the various resources available at Georgia Institute of Technology. If you are concerned about yourself or your friends' eating and exercise habits, please contact the Georgia Tech Eating Disorder Treatment Team at 404-894-9980.

Eating Disorder Treatment Team

The Eating Disorder Treatment Team is a multidisciplinary group made up of representatives from Stamps Health Services and the Georgia Tech Counseling Center.

This team provides nutrition assessments, medical evaluations and treatment, psychiatric evaluation and treatment, and ongoing individual and group therapies, all aimed at helping to identify and treat students with concerns around eating.

We see students with anorexia nervosa, bulimia, and binge eating and overeating disorders. We believe our team approach allows us to best meet the complicated needs of students with eating disorders.

In the case that a student's symptoms require more intensive intervention, the Eating Disorder Treatment Team will provide referrals to community providers.

Descriptions of Eating Disorders

Anorexia nervosa is an illness marked by a fear of gaining weight and a disturbed body image. Individuals with anorexia tend to see themselves as overweight, even as their weight drops lower and lower.

Commonly, people with anorexia do not see their behavior as problematic. As weight drops, women will lose their normal menstrual cycle. People suffering from anorexia often also struggle with perfectionism, depression, and obsessive thinking around food. If left untreated, anorexia can lead to dehydration, cardiac problems, starvation, and even death.

Individuals with bulimia may or may not have trouble maintaining their weight. Instead, those with bulimia bounce back and forth between recurrent eating binges that feel out of control and purging behaviors (vomiting, laxative use). In some cases, fasting and over-exercise replace outright purging. This illness is often associated with intense shame, problems with impulsivity and depression.

In binge eating disorders, individuals have established a pattern of overeating with a sense of the loss of control. Often, eating is triggered by depression or anxiety, but the episodes of binging result in a sense of guilt or disgust. If untreated, binge eating may lead to obesity and is often associated with depression.

A diagnosis of Eating Disorders Not Otherwise Specified (ED NOS) occurs when a person is struggling with eating disorder thoughts, feelings or behaviors, but does not have all the symptoms of anorexia or bulimia.

These psychological disorders are as important, as serious, and as common as anorexia or bulimia nervosa. In fact, more individuals suffer from EDNOS than from bulimia and anorexia combined, and the risks are often just as complex as with anorexia or bulimia.

Online Assessment

Does your weight affect the way you feel about yourself? Are you satisfied with your eating patterns? Georgia Tech students have:

- The opportunity to anonymously self-screen for eating disorders
- Access to unlimited, anonymous online screenings
- Help-seeking tools
- Immediate results and referrals to Georgia Tech resource following completion of screening questionnaire.

Anonymous online screening is available at www.health.gatech.edu/collegetheresponse. The keyword is GEORGIA TECH.

To meet someone from the Eating Disorder Treatment Team call 404-894-9980.