



NetCare Access is your connection to mental health and alcohol/drug addiction services in Franklin County.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, visit one of our crisis sites or call our 24-hour NetCare Access Crisis Hotline at (614) 276-C.A.R.E.

# **ACCESSING** Information About **Bulimia Nervosa**

## What is Bulimia Nervosa?

Those suffering from bulimia generally suffer from emotional needs. It is common that sufferers “binge-eat” large quantities of food. After bingeing, there is an urge to rid the body of the recently eaten food. This is done by vomiting, taking laxatives, excessive exercise and/or all the above. Bulimia can be hard to recognize as sufferers do not tend to lose weight dramatically. As with most eating disorders, people usually develop bulimia to have a feeling of “being in control” of certain parts of life. Bulimia is often associated with low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence.

## Facts

- Most binge on high-calorie, high-fat foods. After bingeing, it is common for one to feel guilt and shameful.
- It is not uncommon for those who binge to eat up to four times the normal amount of food in one setting.
- After purging (vomiting or taking laxatives) consumed foods, some describe feelings of relief and light-headedness.
- Some suffering from bulimia purge every few months, others purge several times a day.
- Purging can lead to automatic vomiting after eating.
- Bulimia can take over the life of a person making them feel trapped and desperate.
- Bulimia can cause low levels of essential minerals in the body, can stop vital organs from functioning, can cause heart failure and ultimately death.

(over)

## **Signs**

- Uncontrollable urges to eat large amounts of food
- Obsession with food, feeling “out of control” around food
- Distorted perception of body/weight
- Mood swings
- Depression/anxiety
- Binge eating
- Vomiting after eating
- Excessive use of laxatives, diuretics and/or enemas
- Fasting
- Excessive exercise
- Secrecy
- Stealing/hoarding food

## **Symptoms**

- Frequent weight changes
- Sore throat
- Tooth decay
- Bad breath caused by excessive vomiting
- Feeling tired/lethargic
- Organ/heart problems
- No longer having a menstrual cycle
- Loss of interest in sex
- Poor skin
- Hair loss

## **Treatment:**

Several intervention approaches are available to help individuals diagnosed with bulimia:

- Self-help/support groups have proven to be highly beneficial for those recovering from an eating disorder
- Psychotherapy is necessary to help one understand the root cause of the eating disorder
- General practitioners should be sought out to get guidance for the best route of treatment and an understanding of any medical complications

## **How to receive help:**

A person with bulimia can benefit from talking with a professional, such as a physician, psychologist, counselor, psychiatrist or social worker, who can assist in providing the individual and his or her family with additional approaches to treatment.

If you or someone you know has bulimia and is in a crisis, contact Netcare Access at (614) 276-C.A.R.E. Mental health assessments are provided at both Netcare’s crisis sites, located at 199 S. Central Avenue and 741 E. Broad Street, on a walk-in, first-come-first-served basis, Monday through Friday. Netcare Access provides 24-hour crisis intervention and assessment services to Franklin County residents experiencing a mental health or alcohol/drug crisis. For more information on Netcare’s services, contact us at:

**Netcare Corporation  
199 S. Central Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43223**

**Administrative line: (614) 274-9500**

**Assessment West: (614) 278-0122**

**Assessment East: (614) 278-0155**

**24-hour crisis hotline: (614) 276-C.A.R.E. (2273)**

**[www.netcareaccess.org](http://www.netcareaccess.org)**