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Bulimia Nervosa

Understanding the Cycle of Binge Eating and Purging

What is Bulimia Nervosa?



Bulimia Nervosa is an eating disorder characterised by:

- Recurrent episodes of binge eating (consuming large amounts of food in a short time)
- A feeling of losing control during eating episodes
- Compensatory behaviours to prevent weight gain, such as vomiting, excessive exercise, fasting, or misuse of laxatives

Research suggests that bulimia is not about food alone; it is closely linked to emotional regulation, self-esteem, and body image concerns.

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The Bulimia Cycle

Many individuals experience a repeating cycle:



Studies indicate that binge eating may temporarily reduce negative emotions, but the cycle often reinforces psychological distress over time.

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Psychological Factors

Research highlights several factors associated with Bulimia Nervosa:

- Body dissatisfaction and appearance-related pressures
- Perfectionism and self-criticism
- Difficulty managing emotions
- Low self-esteem
- Anxiety, depression, and stress

Bulimia develops through a combination of biological, psychological, and social influences rather than a single cause.



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Effects on Mental and Physical Health

Bulimia can affect multiple areas of well-being:

Mental Health

- Anxiety and depression
- Feelings of shame and secrecy
- Emotional instability

Physical Health

- Electrolyte imbalances
- Digestive problems
- Dental erosion from repeated vomiting
- Fatigue and dehydration

Early intervention can significantly improve recovery outcomes.



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Recovery is Possible

Evidence-based treatments can help individuals recover:

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for Eating Disorders
- Nutritional rehabilitation
- Family-based support
- Psychiatric care when needed

Recovery involves healing one's relationship with food, body image, and emotions, not simply changing eating habits.



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