



Mental Health

Taking care of yourself

Supporting someone else with mental health difficulties can be difficult and stressful at times. It is important for you to take care of your own physical and mental health to be able to support someone else effectively. Here are some tips to on coping with supporting another person.

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- **Stay physically healthy by eating healthily, exercising regularly and sleeping well.** This will improve both your physical and mental health, and exercise in particular can be very effective in alleviating stress.
 - **Talk about what you're going through with someone you can trust.** Keeping someone's difficulties to yourself can be scary, lonely, and make you feel responsible for their welfare, so try to offload onto somebody who can advise you on how best to support your friend or relative.
 - **Allow yourself to take a break.** It can be hard to take a break and may make you feel guilty or worried about the other person, but taking a break will allow you to relax, de-stress and refresh yourself.
- **Be realistic about what you can do.** It is natural to want to always be there for your friend or relative and do everything you can to help them, but it is important for you to recognise the extent of what you can do for your friend or relative, and when it's getting too much and you need to take a break.
 - **Make a plan for what to do in a crisis.** If your friend or relative self harms or is suicidal, it can be helpful to make a plan about what to do if a crisis happens to prevent you from stressing about it too much.

For more help, information and support, you can contact the Blue Light Infoline run by the charity Mind UK on 03003035999. This is a telephone line for people supporting others with mental health difficulties and can provide information about different disorders, as well as advice about dealing with different situations.

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Broaching the topic of mental health

If you're worried that someone you know might be struggling or displaying worrying symptoms, you might want to talk to them about it. Asking someone if they are 'okay' can be scary, and you might not be sure how they will react. Here are some tips about broaching the subject.

- **Prepare**
 - Be in a mindset where you are ready and have the time to listen
 - Be prepared to have a difficult conversation, and understand that your friend might get upset or be embarrassed
 - Choose a moment where you are both available to talk in a private space
- **Ask a question to begin the conversation and mention things that might have worried you** e.g.
 - I've been worried about you, can we talk about what you've been feeling?
 - You seem to be going through a difficult time, is there anything I can do to help?
 - How are you doing? I've noticed you've been a lot quieter recently.
- **Listen to them.**
 - Encourage them to explain what they're feeling
 - Take what they're saying seriously
 - Don't interrupt, allow them to take their time and pause to think
 - Show you're listening by checking you've understood e.g. 'It seems like you're feeling...'
 - Stay calm even if they get upset or angry
- **Encourage them to take action.**
 - Ask how you can offer support
 - Help them think about ways they can help themselves
 - If you have found something useful for coping, share it with them
 - You can encourage them to go and see the GP
- **Stay in touch**, make sure you check in on your friend every so often to make sure they're feeling okay, and try not to rush them into seeking help; it can take a long time.



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Dealing with denial

When offering support to someone you know, they might deny that they have a problem, even though it may seem clear to you that they do. Here are some useful things to do in this instance.

- **Acknowledge that your friend or relative isn't ready to talk**, and don't try to pressurise them into it.
- **Avoid a confrontation**, as this can be even more upsetting both for you and the person you know.
- **Offer your support** by asking if there is anyone else that can help, and letting your friend or relative know that you'll be there if they ever want to talk.
- **Let your friend or relative know that you are concerned and care** about them.
- **Ask if you can talk to your friend or relative again next week.**

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Encouraging someone to get help

Sometimes, even when they talk about it with a friend or family member, people with mental health difficulties are unwilling to get help. They might feel scared, or be unwilling to admit that there is a problem with the way they are feeling. Although you can't force someone into getting help, here are some tips for encouraging your friend or relative to seek help.

- Offer to go to a doctor's appointment with them.
- Talk to them about how they are feeling.
- Try to ask and understand why they might not want help.
- Explain that you want to try and help them.
- Offer to talk to their doctor before their appointment.



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Worried about self harm or suicide

You might be worried that your friend or relative is self harming, or be supporting someone who you know is self harming. Here are some tips about how to support friends and family who feel suicidal or are self harming.

- When talking to someone who is suicidal, you can:
 - Listen to how they are feeling
 - Be understanding
 - Ask about the things that are stopping them from acting on their thoughts, as this will help them to focus on the positives.
 - Help them to focus on positive things.
 - Make a plan about how to keep them safe.
 - Ring 999 if you are worried that they have tried to, or are going to try and take their own life.
- If someone tells you that they are self harming, you can be helpful by:
 - Talking to them about their feelings and being understanding
 - Helping them to find out more about self harm
 - Finding out about [*what help is available*](#).
- When someone tells you about their self harm, it is important not to:
 - React strongly (by being angry or shocked etc.)
 - Make them promise to stop or blackmail them into stopping
 - Expect them to stop immediately
 - Feel responsible for their self harm
 - Struggle with them whilst they are self harming. Instead, suggest talking about their feelings, or leave them until they are ready to talk.

For more information about the recognising signs of self harm and understanding why some people self harm, some useful websites are:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Self-injury/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

<http://www.thesite.org/mental-health/self-harm/why-do-people-self-harm-5680.html>

<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/self-harm/#.VhLYJNa5fll>

You can find more useful information about supporting someone with a mental illness on the Rethink website: <http://www.rethink.org/carers-family-friends/what-you-need-to-know/supporting-someone-with-a-mental-illness>.



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Learning about mental illnesses

If your friend or relative has been diagnosed with a particular condition, or you are wondering whether symptoms they are displaying could be rooted in a particular mental illness, finding out about the condition, how it is treated, and particular ways you can help can help you to support and understand your friend or relative more effectively. Here are some websites with more information about various mental illnesses.

- <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/mentalhealth/Pages/Mentalhealthhome.aspx>
- <http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/a-z-mental-health/>
- <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-a-z/>
- <https://www.rethink.org/diagnosis-treatment/conditions>

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Talking to someone about your worries

The first step to getting help and overcoming your problems is often talking to somebody you know and trust about how you are feeling. However, talking to someone about your problems for the first time can be scary and embarrassing, and you might not know what to say.

- **Think about who you're going to tell and how they might react.** When you tell somebody else about your worries, they might feel upset, and they will be thinking about how mental health and your problems fit with you as a person. Be prepared for this.
 - **Choose a time when you are ready to talk.** Choose a moment where you are in a private space and both have plenty of time. Make sure you are in a mood where you can talk openly about your problems.
 - **Be ready for questions.** The person you are talking to might not fully understand, and they might need to ask lots of questions to help them to understand and come to terms with what is happening.
-
- **Bad reactions don't always last.** The first time you talk to your friend or relative, they might react negatively or seem unhelpful, but often this doesn't last as the person might need a while to come to terms with what you have told them.
 - **Bring extra information.** If you have been diagnosed with a mental illness, it can be helpful to bring leaflets or information that explains how you are feeling.

**Talking to
someone about
your worries**

**When should I
go to the GP?**

**How can I make
a GP
appointment?**

**How should I
use my GP
appointment?**

**What happens
next?**

Confidentiality

- **Keep the conversation light.** Talking about your problems can be difficult, and keeping the conversation light will help you to relax.

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When should I go to the GP?

It is always okay to seek help, and if you're worried about your mental health, a GP appointment could be the first step in getting the help you need. Here are some reasons why you might want to book a GP appointment.

- You are finding your thoughts and feelings distressing
- You are finding that negative thoughts and feelings are affecting your everyday life
- You are feeling low, or constantly anxious
- You are thinking negatively about yourself
 - You are seeing or hearing things that others aren't
 - You are having trouble sleeping, or sleeping too much
- You are not enjoying things as much as you used to

Talking to someone about your worries

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How can I make a GP appointment?

*Talking to
someone about
your worries*

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If you are registered as a member of the surgery (if you have been to an appointment before, you will be), you can ring the surgery on 01454772153 and ask to make an appointment.

If you are not registered but are **over 16**, you can visit the surgery and ask to register. You will be given a form asking for your name, date of birth, NHS number (if you know it) and the name and address of your previous GP if you had one.

If you are **under 16**, you will need a parent to register you with the surgery.

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How should I use my GP appointment?

After you've booked an appointment with your GP, it can be difficult to know what to say once you get to your appointment. Here are some tips on how to use your appointment.

- Prepare for your appointment.
 - If you feel it will take a long time, book a double appointment.
 - Prepare a list of problems or concerns you want to discuss.
 - Write a list of questions you might like to ask.
 - Ask a friend or relation to come with you to the appointment.
- During your appointment...
 - Don't be afraid to ask any questions
 - Focus on how you feel, not a diagnosis you think you might have
 - Be honest and open- there isn't a particular way you need to say things to get help
 - Try not to be embarrassed as doctors are trained to be supportive and sensitive

- The GP might...
 - Ask about you and your family's medical history
 - Ask about any thoughts, feelings, or moods you're experiencing
 - Ask about any sleep problems you might be having
 - Measure your weight or blood pressure

Talking to someone about your worries

When should I go to the GP?

How can I make a GP appointment?

How should I use my GP appointment?

What happens next?

Confidentiality (links to confidentiality section)

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*Talking to
someone about
your worries*

*When should I
go to the GP?*

*How can I make
a GP
appointment?*

*How should I
use my GP
appointment?*

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next?**

Confidentiality

What happens next?

If you are under 18 and the GP thinks that you have a mental health problem that puts you in danger, it is likely that you will be referred to CAMHS (children and adolescent mental health services). In cases where you are not referred to CAMHS, you may be offered support from your GP.

- CAMHS or the GP will give you an assessment where they might ask you about your moods, thoughts and feelings, or use questionnaires to gauge these.
- After your assessment, there are a few things that might happen:
 - **Diagnosis.** You might be diagnosed with a condition, which will be explained to you in a meeting.
 - **Referral.** If you have a specialised problem, you might be referred to a more specialist team.
 - **Prescription.** You might be prescribed medication for your diagnosis.
 - **Therapy.** You might be assigned a psychiatrist or referred for talking therapies such as CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) which helps you to look at your thought processes and how you can adapt them.

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Helplines

If you feel suicidal or like you are going to hurt other people, call 999.

- SANE runs a national, out-of-hours mental health helpline offering specialist emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental illness, including family, friends and carers. They are open every day of the year from 6pm to 11pm.

[http://www.sane.org.uk/what we do/support/helpline](http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/helpline)

- PAPYRUS offer advice to young people concerned about what they or a friend is feeling. <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>
- Swtichboard offers advice and support to young people who identify or think they might identify as LGBT+. All volunteers from the helpline identify as LGBT+. <https://switchboard.lgbt/>
- Samaritans are open 24/7 to support or advise you through a crisis, or any problems or worries you might be having.
<http://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/contact-us>
- MIND infoline can give you advice about where to get help, different medications and treatments, and types of mental health problem.
<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>



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Symptoms of stress and anxiety

What is a panic attack?

How can I avoid becoming stressed or anxious?

How can I become more resilient to pressure?

Where can I go for help?

Symptoms of stress and anxiety

- When suffering from stress or anxiety, you might feel...
 - Frustrated, agitated and moody
 - Overwhelmed, like you are losing control
 - Like it is difficult to relax or quieten your mind
 - Unconfident and depressed
 - A sense of dread
 - Nervous, anxious or afraid
 - Restless and unable to sit still
- You might also...
 - Find it hard to concentrate
 - Eat too much or too little
 - Feel tearful or cry a lot
 - Bite your nails or pick at your skin
- Stress and anxiety can affect your physical health too. Some physical symptoms you might experience are...
 - Low energy or tiredness
 - Headaches
 - Insomnia (inability to sleep)
 - Frequent colds or infections
 - Panic attacks
 - Constipation or diarrhoea
 - Shallow breathing
 - Chest pains
 - Dizziness
 - Muscle aches and pains
 - Needing to go to the toilet more frequently



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What is a panic attack?

A panic attack is defined as an intense rush or physical and psychological symptoms.

- Panic attacks can make you feel very afraid, and can cause you to develop a phobia where you feel you have to avoid certain situations in case of a panic attack.
- During a panic attack, you might feel like...
 - You're losing control
 - You're going to faint
 - You're going to die
 - You're having a heart attack
- You will also experience physical symptoms, which might be...
 - Sweating
 - Trembling or shakiness
 - Shortness of breath
 - Chest pain
 - Feeling sick
 - Pounding heart beat
 - Feeling unable to breathe

If you regularly experience panic attacks, it is important to *book an appointment with the GP* (link to getting help), who will be able to advise you on the best way to prevent the attacks, and refer you for treatments such as talking therapies to help you to understand why you are having panic attacks.

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How can I avoid becoming stressed or anxious?

Identify what triggers you to become stressed or anxious, e.g.

- Frequently occurring events such as worries about studying or homework
- One-off events such as worries about upcoming exams
- Ongoing events such as being bullied, or

being a young carer

When you're feeling stressed out, it might help to...

- Take time out to clear your head
- Eat well balanced meals
- Get enough sleep
- Exercise regularly
- Accept that there are some things you cannot control
- Talk to someone about how you are feeling

Organise your time effectively

- Identify the time of day when you are able to carry out tasks most efficiently
- Make a list of things you need to do in order of importance
- Balance stressful tasks with tasks you find less stressful
- Try not to do too much at once, and take regular breaks

Address some of the causes of your stress. For example, if you are being bullied or discriminated against at school or work, you could talk to your boss or a teacher to try to resolve the issue.

Accept that there are some things you can't change. There are some aspects of life that we can't control, such as exams, but you can work out a way to work towards them effectively.



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How can I become more resilient to pressure?

Becoming more resilient to pressure can allow you to cope with some of the more stressful events in your life more effectively, without having to become stressed or anxious.

- Practice being more assertive with others
- Use relaxation techniques such as listening to music or running
- Develop your interests and hobbies
- Spend time with your friends
- Find a balance in your life
- Look after yourself physically by eating and sleeping well
- Give yourself a break by:
 - Going somewhere different
 - Resolving conflicts
 - Forgiving yourself when you make a mistake
- Use your support network e.g. family, friends, school counsellor

To read more about becoming more resilient and coping with pressure, see the website links below:
<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/stress/dealing-with-pressure/?o=6278#.ViUOpNbfgdk>
<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/stress/developing-resilience/#.ViUWVNbfgdk>

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Where can I go for help?

Lots of people experience anxiety and stress, but for some people, the feelings they experience can become overwhelming.

Symptoms of stress and anxiety

What is a panic attack?

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Where can I go for help?

- If anxiety or stress is a serious problem for you, it is important that you book an appointment with your GP. Anxiety and stress can become serious problems when...
 - You find yourself worrying a lot about things that might not happen
 - You regularly experience panic attacks
 - You notice yourself experiencing symptoms of stress or anxiety
- Treatments for stress and anxiety include:
 - CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy), which can help you to recognise your thought patterns
 - Medication or antidepressants to prevent panic attacks

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What is self harm?

Self harm is when someone intentionally damages or injures their body, usually as a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress.

There are many different ways that someone might harm themselves, including:

- Poisoning themselves or taking tablets
- Cutting themselves
- Burning themselves
- Banging their head or throwing themselves against something hard
- Punching themselves
- Sticking things in their body
- Swallowing things
- Excessively exercising

If you are self harming, it is important to know that you are not alone, and around 1 in 10 young people are thought to have self harmed.

Have you just self harmed? Are you thinking about suicide? Are you worried you might be in danger? Call one of the helplines below for immediate advice or for someone to listen.

PAPYRUS 08000684141 Mon-Fri 10am-10pm Weekends 2pm-10pm

Samaritans 116123 24 hours

What is self harm?

Why do people self harm?

How can I cope with suicidal thoughts?

How can I stop self harming?

How can I get help? (link to getting help)

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Why do people self harm?

There are many reasons why people self harm, and it can be helpful to understand why some people might want to harm themselves. Here are some common reasons why people might self harm.

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Feeling depressed
- Low self esteem
- Social problems such as being bullied
- Trauma such as a family member dying

Some young people have explained the reasons why they self harm and how it makes them feel. These include:

- It is a way of relieving emotional pressure
- They feel it takes away their negative feelings
- The pain stops them from feeling numb or dead inside
- It is a punishment for something they feel ashamed or guilty for
- It is a way of communicating their

unhappiness

- It gives them a sense of control
- They want to end their lives

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How can I cope with suicidal thoughts?

When you can no longer see why you should keep on living, the feelings can be overwhelming, and whether you know why you feel this way or not, it can be very difficult to explain how you are feeling to friends and family.

Talk to someone about how you are feeling. Although this can be difficult, talking to another person can be the first step in getting help, and allow someone else to give you the support you might need.

- Make a plan of steps you can take during a suicidal crisis
- Make a schedule to stick to, even when your feelings feel out of control
 - Exercise regularly, for around 30 minutes a day
- Identify triggers or situations that lead to you having suicidal thoughts
 - Build a support network of family and friends
- Remove any means of killing yourself from around your house
 - Make a distraction box of items that comfort you
- Express yourself by writing down your thoughts and feelings in a diary or creating artwork

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What is self harm?

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How can I stop self harming?

Lots of different emotions can cause you to want to self harm, but you might also be feeling no emotion. Try to think about the emotions that make you want to self harm, and what you can do to avoid or cope with them.

When you feel like self harming, some useful things to do might be to...

- Talk about your feelings with someone you trust
- Squeeze an ice cube
- Draw a butterfly on yourself and try to keep it alive; self harming kills the butterfly
- Listen to music
- Exercise

If you feel **alone or isolated**, you could talk to a friend, or use message boards like <https://www.childline.org.uk/Talk/Boards/Pages/Threads.aspx?boardid=bff63842-edd2-4c62-a6cd-e7b70c73b24c&brdname=Self+harm> to talk about how you're feeling.

If you feel **out of control**, try cleaning or organising something.

If you feel **numb**, try focusing on your breathing or doing something you enjoy such as playing computer games or shopping.

If you feel like **you want to escape**, try drawing on yourself in red pen, having a hot or cold shower, massaging lotion in places you would usually harm, biting on a lemon or squeezing an ice cube.

If you feel like **you hate yourself**, try listing good things about yourself, phoning a friend, having a bath, writing or painting.

If you feel **angry**, try snapping twigs, squeezing clay, punching a pillow, having a cold shower, screaming or crying.

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What is depression?

Although some life events can be thought to 'cause' depression such as a bereavement or trauma, there can sometimes be no obvious 'cause'.

It is important to recognise that some events in our lives might be more significant to us than for other people, so something that has happened that has made you feel low should not be disregarded by comparison to other people's problems.

**What is
depression?**

**How can I help
myself?**

**What
treatment is
available?**

**Getting help
([link to getting
help section](#))**

People with depression often feel...

- Restless and agitated
- Low spirited for most of the day
- Numb, empty and despairing
- Isolated and unable to relate to people
- Irritable or impatient
- Helpless
- Tearful
- Guilty
- Low self esteem
- Lack of pleasure from activities they usually enjoy
- Suicidal
- Less interest in sex

There are also physical symptoms of depression, including...

- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping more than usual
- Feeling tired with no energy
- Change in appetite or weight
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Changes in menstrual cycle (periods)

Socially, someone with depression might...

- Start doing worse at school
- Avoid contact with friends
- Neglect hobbies and interests
- Self harm
- Avoid social events

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How can I help myself?

Depression can be difficult to cope with, and it can feel very lonely, and like nobody understands you. However, often a friend or relative will be more than willing to listen and support you through these feelings, as well as staff at the helplines listed [here](#).

- Try to keep up with social events, even when you don't feel like it
- Try to exercise. This could be going for walks, runs, dancing, or joining a sport, but exercise is a powerful tool for depression
 - Try to establish a healthy sleep routine

What is depression?

How can I help myself?

What treatment is available?

**Getting help
(link to getting help section)**

Try to break the cycle of negativity:

- Ask if you'd say what you're saying to yourself about someone else
- Allow yourself to be less than perfect
- Socialise with positive people
- Keep a log of your negative thoughts and what triggered them

Try to look after yourself:

- Allow yourself to have positive experiences such as days out
- Pay attention to your personal appearance
- Set yourself goals to achieve that will give you a sense of satisfaction
- Set reminders for things you find hard to remember
- Eat as healthily as possible
- Be cautious with smoking, alcohol and caffeine as this can affect your depression

For more information about dealing with depression, visit <http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/depression.asp>

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What treatment is available?

If you think you have depression, you might be wondering how it can be treated. When you see the GP, it will be explained to you what will happen next, but here are a few ideas.

- CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) is a type of talking therapy that can help you to understand and change your negative thoughts, feelings and behaviour.
- You may be prescribed antidepressants such as Prozac (fluoxetine) for severe depression.
- Counselling may help you to express your feelings and find solutions to some of your problems.
- Your GP may be able to suggest some local support groups where you can share your thoughts and feelings to support each other.

***What is
depression?***

***How can I help
myself?***

***What
treatment is
available?***

***Getting help
(link to getting
help section)***



Mental Health

What is an eating disorder?

People have different relationships with food, and this might develop into an eating problem if you don't eat a regular balanced diet for a long period of time. It is important to understand that eating disorders are often not just a problem with food, but an expression of how you are feeling emotionally.

An eating problem may be classed as an eating disorder depending on your medical criteria such as your weight and your symptoms. Although you might not want a diagnosis, it can be helpful to consider what might suggest you have an eating problem, so that you can try to recognise and overcome the symptoms.

- Anorexia nervosa- characterised by severe weight loss due to avoiding food and meals, restricting calorie intake, and trying to control weight loss by compulsively exercising.
- Bulimia- characterised by 'purging' after eating by taking laxatives or vomiting, and having periods of fasting and bingeing.
- Binge eating disorder- characterised by uncontrollable bingeing, often until uncomfortably full, despite not feeling hungry, and feeling that life would be better if weight is lost.
- EDNOS (Eating Disorder Not Otherwise Specified)- this is a diagnosis of eating disorder where the person might have symptoms of more than one eating disorder.

What is an eating disorder?

How can I help myself recover?

What support and treatment is available?

What should I be eating?

What's wrong with losing lots of weight?

How can I get help? (Link to getting help section)

For more information about different eating disorders and their symptoms, see <http://www.rethink.org/diagnosis-treatment/conditions/eating-disorders/symptoms>

Frome Valley Medical Centre



Mental Health

How can I help myself recover?

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- Talk to someone you trust about how you're feeling. They might be able to support you by encouraging you, and preventing a relapse.
- The next step might be making an appointment with the GP, which you can find out more about [here](#).
- Try to calm yourself down if you're feeling low by visiting a friend, listening to music, painting, or doing something that works for you.
- Keep yourself busy after mealtimes.
- Try not to compare yourself to other people or friends in recovery.
- Write a list of your positive and negative feelings and read through your positive thoughts when you're feeling negative.

Worried about putting on weight?

It is normal to be worried about putting on weight, and part of recovery is coming to terms with the idea that putting on weight is not something to be feared. Here are some tips on how to cope with putting on weight:

- Avoid looking at yourself in mirrors and checking yourself all the time.
- Make some cards about why you want to recover and look at these when you're finding it difficult.
- Avoid magazines full of photos of celebrities and articles about the new fad diets.
- Take clothes that don't fit to the charity shop and go shopping for some new ones that you feel comfortable in with a friend.

Worried about relapsing?

Relapsing can be upsetting and scary, but the important thing is that you get back up and try again. Recovery can be a long, difficult process, but it is worth it in the end.

Frome Valley Medical Centre



Mental Health

What support and treatment is available?

There are different treatments for eating disorders depending on your diagnosis and how severe the eating disorder has become.

- Many of the treatments for eating disorders involve talking therapies, because these are the most effective at dealing with the emotional difficulties often thought to be the root of many

What is talking therapy?

Cognitive behavioural therapy- looking at how your thoughts and feelings can affect your actions

Interpersonal therapy- looking at connections between your relationships and how you feel

Dialectical behaviour therapy- can help you become more aware of your emotions and at accepting yourself

eating disorders.

- Although there is no medication for eating disorders, you may be prescribed antidepressants or a drug called Olanzapine, which is an antipsychotic, but can help with anxiety about food.
- If you are extremely underweight, in danger, or other treatment you have received hasn't worked, you may be admitted to a clinic or hospital, where you will receive support from occupational therapists, psychotherapists, nurses, doctors, and dieticians.
- In clinics, one of the treatments is 'refeeding', where you are fed particular foods with the aim of gaining weight, something that will be explained to you first.

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Mental Health

What should I be eating?

A report from the NHS suggests that a teenage girl should be consuming around 2300kcal a day, and a teenage boy should be consuming around 3000kcal a day. Here are a few tips on how to manage a healthy, balanced diet.

What is an eating disorder?

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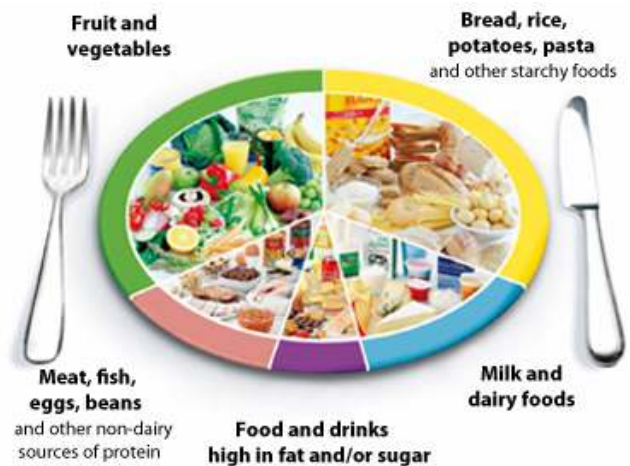
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- Try to consume at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day, as this provides the vitamins and minerals for a healthy diet.



- Starchy foods should make up around one third of your diet, so try to base your meals around starchy foods such as pasta, rice and potato.
- Wholegrain varieties of starchy foods can make you feel more full, and provide you with fibre which is important for healthy bowel movements.
- Fish contains lots of protein and oily fish such as salmon and mackerel is full of unsaturated fat and omega-3, which can help to prevent heart disease.
- Try not to eat too much saturated fat or sugar, as these can contribute to weight gain, high blood cholesterol, and heart disease.
- Eat less salt, as a diet high in salt can put you at risk of high blood pressure.
- Don't skip breakfast, as breakfast regulates your metabolism and allows you to start the day healthily.
- For more information about healthy eating, see <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/Healthyeating.aspx>.



Mental Health

What's wrong with losing lots of weight?

Sometimes losing weight is a good thing, for example, if you're overweight or obese and want to get down to a healthy weight. However, being underweight, or wanting to lose more weight whilst being at a healthy weight can become dangerous.

Being underweight can pose lots of health problems if it is for a prolonged period of time, including:

- Kidney problems
- Abnormal heart rhythms and heart failure
- Osteoporosis (weakened bones, increasing the risk of breaks and fractures)
- Dry skin and hair
- Hair loss
- Growth of a downy hair over the body in an attempt to keep warm
- Fainting, fatigue and weakness

Purging by vomiting and using laxatives can cause additional health problems such as:

- Chemical imbalance causing irregular heart beat and heart failure
- Inflammation and damage to the oesophagus
- Permanent constipation and reliance on laxatives
- Bad breath
- Acid damage to tooth enamel
- Painful acid reflux (when acid from the stomach rises up the throat)

If you are underweight and afraid of gaining weight, or are a healthy weight and trying to lose weight, it might be a good idea to talk to your GP or someone you trust about how you are feeling and get help before developing an eating disorder.

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