

Binge Eating Disorder

Almost all people with binge eating disorder have a history of dieting. They may have grown up in a bigger body than considered desirable and felt pressure to be smaller. After dieting for some time, the body's natural response is to want food. For some people, this leads to binge eating. Dieting is not a solution, and in fact can make the problem worse. It also reinforces the shame people have about their bodies.

People who binge eat:

- eat a large amount of food in a short period of time
- may eat very quickly
- feel very ashamed of their bodies
- may eat alone
- often have weight cycling (weight has gone up and down over time)
- usually feel very guilty and ashamed of binge eating
- do not use vomiting, compulsive exercise, or laxatives to try to control their weight
- feel out of control during binges
- may plan their binges, or it may feel more spontaneous, for example, eating dinner, having dessert, then feeling unable to stop eating

Many people with binge eating disorder plan to diet through the day, then find themselves very hungry in the evening, and end up bingeing. This can lead to shame and feeling like they have failed or lack control. They may resolve to do better the following day and plan to diet again. While some people with binge eating disorder have large bodies, some do not. People may be surprised or may not believe them if they share that they binge eat.