

Fad Diets & Eating Disorders

Chapter 6
Lesson 2

Diets & Gimmicks

- **Fad diets** – weight-loss plans that are popular for only a short time
 - Hard to stick with because limit food variety
 - Do not offer info or help form a healthy eating pattern
 - Limits nutrients for health & growth
 - Weight lost is usually regained
- **Diet gimmicks** – deceptive approaches that are costly, unsafe, & ineffective

Types of Fad Diets

- **Liquid Diets** – replace food intake with special liquid formula
 - Lack energy & nutrients (usually high-protein, low-carbohydrates)
 - FDA requires warning labels
- **Fasting** – abstain from eating
 - Deprives of energy & nutrients
 - Body uses protein stored in muscle for energy
 - If fast from liquids, may suffer from dehydration
- **Diet Pills** – usually work by suppressing appetite
 - Can also cause drowsiness, anxiety, racing heart, or other side effects
 - May also be addictive
 - May also cause body to lose water → dehydration
 - Claim things that are untrue – “burn” or “block” fat

Weight Cycling

- The repeated pattern of loss and regain of body weight
- Also referred to as seesaw or yo-yo dieting
- Some diets or products may help lose water, not body fat → water comes back
- **Slow & steady weight loss is the best strategy for long-lasting results**

Eating Disorders

- An extreme, harmful eating behavior that can cause serious illness or even death
 - Concerns for weight loss can get out of control – become obsessed with thinness
 - May be brought on by mental or emotional factors such as poor body image, social & family pressures, & perfectionism
 - Teens with weight problems, depression, or substance abuse may be more at risk for an eating disorder
- 90% of those with eating disorders are females
- Need professional help

Anorexia Nervosa

- A disorder in which the irrational fear of becoming obese results in severe weight loss from self-imposed starvation
 - “without appetite” – “of nervous origin”
 - Psychological disorder – usually females in teens & 20’s
 - Symptoms: extremely low caloric intake, an obsession with exercising, emotional problems, an unnatural interest in food, a distorted body image, & denial of an eating problem

Consequences of Anorexia Nervosa

- Reduction in body fat will cause females to stop menstruating, loss of bone density, low body temperature, low blood pressure, slowed metabolism, & reduction in organ size
- May develop serious heart problems → irregular heartbeat, cardiac arrest, sudden death
- Treatment may include a stay in a clinic or hospital to receive nutrients & gain weight
 - Will also require psychological treatment to address misconceptions

Bulimia Nervosa

- Is a disorder in which some form of purging or clearing of the digestive tract follows cycles of overeating
 - May fast or follow strict diet and then binges, quickly consumes large amounts of food
 - After eating, may vomit or use laxatives to purge the food from the body
 - Symptoms: distorted body image & unnatural interest in food
 - Believed to be caused by societal pressures, self-esteem issues, & family problems

Consequences of Bulimia Nervosa

- Vomiting and diarrhea can lead to dehydration, kidney damage, & irregular heartbeat
- Vomiting destroys tooth enamel & damages the tissues of the stomach, esophagus, & mouth
- Laxatives disrupts digestion & absorption & causes nutrient deficiencies – changes the composition of blood
- Treatment usually includes medical & psychological counseling

Binge Eating Disorder

- A disorder characterized by compulsive overeating
 - Consume large amounts of food at one time but do not purge
 - May be a coping mechanism for emotions or depression
- Treatment involves psychological counseling & sometimes medication

Consequences of Binge Eating

- Unhealthy weight gain
- Gallbladder problems
- Hypertension
- High cholesterol
- Increase risk of some cancers

Help for Eating Disorders

- Realize that these disorders are serious
- Need professional medical & psychological help
- If a friend has an eating disorder, discuss with a trusted adult, a counselor, or the school nurse
- Encourage friend to see professional help & be supportive
- HOTLINE # - 1-800-931-2237
- WWW.NATIONALEATINGDISORDERS.ORG

