

ASK FOR HELP

Talking With Your Health Care Professional About Binge Eating Disorder

Binge eating disorder, or B.E.D., is more than just occasionally overeating. If you're upset by your eating binges and think you may suffer from B.E.D., you're not alone. B.E.D. is the most common eating disorder among US adults. It's more common than anorexia and bulimia combined.*

*Based on 12-month and lifetime prevalence estimates among 2,980 US adults aged ≥ 18 years who were assessed for an eating disorder in a national survey

This guide and the included B.E.D. Symptom Checklist contain information and helpful tips that may make it easier to have a productive discussion with your health care professional – whether you've tried to talk about this before or this is the first time you will be having the discussion.

CHART YOUR B.E.D. SYMPTOMS FOR YOUR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL

- Use the B.E.D. Symptom Checklist to organize your thoughts
- Print out your checklist or download it to your smartphone or tablet
- Share it with your health care professional at your appointment

The following questions ask about your eating patterns and behaviors within the last 3 months. For each question, choose the answer that best applies to you. **Please note, this checklist is not a diagnostic tool.** Only a health care professional can diagnose binge eating disorder.

1 During the last 3 months, did you have any episodes of excessive overeating (i.e., eating significantly more than what most people would eat in a similar period of time)?

Yes

No

NOTE: IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO QUESTION 1, YOU MAY STOP. THE REMAINING QUESTIONS DO NOT APPLY TO YOU.

2 Do you feel distressed about your episodes of excessive overeating?

Yes

No

Within the past 3 months...

3 During your episodes of excessive overeating, how often did you feel like you had no control over your eating (e.g., not being able to stop eating, feel compelled to eat, or going back and forth for more food)?

○ — ○ — ○ — ○
never/rarely sometimes often always

4 During your episodes of excessive overeating, how often did you continue eating even though you were not hungry?

○ — ○ — ○ — ○
never/rarely sometimes often always

5 During your episodes of excessive overeating, how often were you embarrassed by how much you ate?

○ — ○ — ○ — ○
never/rarely sometimes often always

6 During your episodes of excessive overeating, how often did you feel disgusted with yourself or guilty afterward?

○ — ○ — ○ — ○
never/rarely sometimes often always

7 During the last 3 months, how often did you make yourself vomit as a means to control your weight or shape?

○ — ○ — ○ — ○
never/rarely sometimes often always

Remember, your health care professional is there to help. By filling out the B.E.D. Symptom Checklist you are giving your health care professional information needed to understand and assess your overall situation.

MAKE B.E.D. YOUR PRIORITY AT THE APPOINTMENT

Whether you make an appointment just to discuss binge eating disorder (B.E.D.) or you bring up B.E.D. during a regular office visit, remember why it's such an important topic for you to discuss with your health care professional. Keeping this purpose in mind will help you stay focused during your conversation.

Here are some more things that may help:

- Let your health care professional know in advance that you're coming in to discuss B.E.D. It will allow him or her to prepare for your visit.
- Arrive before your appointment to fill out forms, look over your notes, and organize your thoughts.
- Start the conversation with your health care professional as soon as you feel you can talk privately.
- Remember, time may be limited so bring up B.E.D. early in the appointment.
- Be specific – describe your symptoms in detail and share your answers from the B.E.D. Symptom Checklist with your health care professional.
- Stay focused – help your health care professional understand that getting help for binge eating is your priority.

HOW DO YOU TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT B.E.D.?

You might say: "I read about B.E.D., could you tell me more?" It may help to share the details of your binge eating episodes with your health care professional, such as:

- How long the episodes last
- How often the episodes occur
- How much food was involved
- What was going on in your life when the episodes took place
- How you felt during and after

CONSIDER THAT IT MAY TAKE TIME

Remember, it may take time to determine if it's B.E.D. and the more information your health care professional has, the better. If you still feel your concerns weren't addressed, don't give up. Health care professionals are accustomed to being asked for referrals. Don't be afraid to ask if a referral to a doctor or other health care professional who specializes in eating disorders might be right for you. Finally, remember that making the decision to talk with your health care professional about B.E.D. isn't easy. But it's a crucial step in getting the help you need.

NOTES

Use the area below to record answers to your questions, information, and instructions you may receive from your health care professional or anything else that may help you.
