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EATING DISORDERS FACT SHEET

The prevalence of eating disorders in women 15-29 years old tend to range from 3%-10%, with bulimia patients outnumbering anorexia patients by at least 2 to 1. (Polivy, (2002). Causes of Eating Disorders. Annual Review of Psychology).

Eating Disorders have the highest mortality rate of all mental illnesses. The mortality (death) rate for eating disorders is approximately 18% in 20-year studies, and 20% in 30-year follow-up studies.

The annual death rate associated with anorexia is more than 12 times higher than the annual death rate due to all other causes combined for females between 15 and 24 years old.

(Cavanaugh, C. (1999). What we know about eating disorders: facts and statistics. In Lemberg, Raymond, & Cohn (Eds.), Eating disorders: A reference sourcebook. Phoenix, AZ.: Oryx Press; Sullivan P.F. (1995). Mortality in anorexia nervosa. American Journal of Psychiatry, 152(7), 1073 - 1074.)

Men are often forgotten because their eating disorder goes undiagnosed, yet about 1 in 10 men is affected with bulimia.

(Bitomsky, (2002).

In a study in Ontario of 2483 female students, significant symptoms of eating disorders and bingeing and purging, or both, were reported by 27% of girls aged 12 - 18 years.

(Jones, Bennett, Olmsted, Lawson, & Rodin, (2001). Disordered eating attitudes and behaviors in teenaged girls: a school-based study. CMAJ, 165(5), 542 - 552.)

37% of Canadian females age 11, 42% of Canadian females age 13 and 48% of Canadian females age 15 say they need to lose weight.

(Health and Welfare Canada (1992). The Health of Canada's youth, views and behaviours of 11-13 and 15-year olds from 11 countries. Ottawa ON: Minister of Supply and Services H39-239/1993.)

52% of girls begin dieting before age 14.

(Johnson et al. (1984). Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 13.)

The fear of being fat is so overwhelming that young girls have indicated in surveys that they are more afraid of becoming fat than they are of cancer, nuclear war, or losing their parents.

(Berzins, L. (1997). Dying to be thin: the prevention of eating disorders and the role of federal policy. APA co-sponsored congressional briefing. USA.)

95% of all dieters regain their lost weight within 1-5 years.

(Grodestein, F, Levine R, Troy, L, Spencer T, Colditz, G, & Stampher M. (1996). Three-year follow-up of participants in a commercial weight loss program. Can you keep it off? Arch Intern Med., 156,1302 - 1306.)

