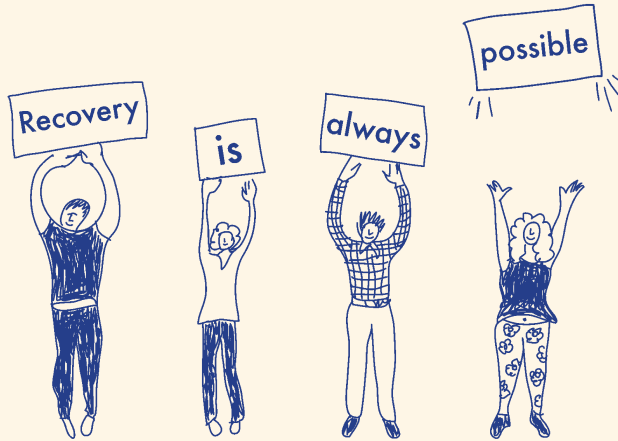


## EDA Aims

- To support people affected and their families.
- To improve the way services and treatments are provided.
- To instil hope that recovery from an eating disorder is always possible.
- To change the way people think and talk about eating disorders.
- To raise awareness and understanding.
- To challenge stigma and perpetuating factors.
- To be a voice for those who are struggling to find their own.
- To strongly promote immediate, early intervention and challenge any barriers to accessing care.
- To promote and encourage research and evidence based practice.



Eating Disorders Association (N.I.)  
3rd Floor, Bryson House  
28 Bedford Street  
Belfast, BT2 7FE

Phone: 028 90 235959  
Email: [info@eatingdisordersni.co.uk](mailto:info@eatingdisordersni.co.uk)  
Web: [www.eatingdisordersni.co.uk](http://www.eatingdisordersni.co.uk)

**We are a voice, a listening ear,  
a support for those affected by  
eating disorders and their families.**

### SERVICES

- Email Support Service
- 24 Hour Helpline Support
- Drop-in Service
- 1-1 Support
- Monthly Support Groups
- Early Intervention/Prevention Programmes for Schools and Youth Groups
- Workshops for Professionals

Disclaimer: This information sheet should not substitute medical advice. EDA (N.I.) does not endorse any third party and is not liable for any actions taken based on the information we provide.

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# About Eating Disorders Association (N.I.)



## 200,000 people in Ireland are affected by eating disorders.

Eating disorders are complex and potentially life threatening conditions with serious physical and psychological implications. On the surface, eating disorders may seem to be about food, body weight and shape, but deep down they are ways of coping with underlying issues or unmanageable feelings.

### THE MAIN EATING DISORDERS ARE:

#### ANOREXIA NERVOSA

A person experiencing anorexia will make determined efforts to attain and maintain a body weight lower than the normal body weight for their age, sex, and height. They will be preoccupied with thoughts about food and the need to lose weight. They may also exercise excessively and engage in purging behaviours.

#### BULIMIA NERVOSA

A person experiencing bulimia engages in repeated episodes of binge eating followed by high-risk behaviours aimed at compensating for the binges. These can include fasting, excessive exercising, self-induced vomiting, the misuse of laxatives, diuretics or other medication. Most people with bulimia maintain a body weight within the normal range for their age, sex, height. It is therefore less obvious than anorexia and can remain unnoticed for longer.

#### BINGE EATING DISORDER

A person experiencing binge eating disorder engages in repeated episodes of bingeing but without purging. A person with binge eating disorder is often in the overweight/obese category. They can find themselves locked into a cycle of dieting, bingeing, self recrimination and self loathing.

Acknowledging there is a problem and deciding to get help is never easy for a person with an eating disorder. Food is turned to as a means of relieving distress and achieving some control over life. Getting better means giving up this way of coping and replacing it with healthier alternatives. This can seem frightening and even impossible.

For friends and family it can be frustrating and extremely difficult to understand. They may have conflicting feelings about the eating disorder: guilt, anger, fear helplessness, etc. Finding appropriate treatment and support is key to the recovery process.

### TREATMENT

Overcoming an eating disorder may require a range of approaches. Treatment should never focus exclusively on eating and weight issues nor should these be ignored.

Effective treatment may include any of the following:

- GP
- Counselling or psychotherapy
- Nutritional counselling/dietary advice
- Psychiatric assessment
- Specialist treatment (in-patient and out-patient programmes)
- Hospitalisation (for acute cases)
- Self help and support services

**Remember... Recovery is Possible  
But Early Intervention is Crucial.**



**EDA NI is the national voluntary organisation providing support and information to people affected by eating disorders.**

### WHO WE ARE:

A voice, a listening ear, a support for those affected by eating disorders and their families.

### WHAT DO WE DO?

Provide support, raise awareness, challenge discrimination and stigma, champion that people access the care that they need and deserve as quickly as possible.

### WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

Our aim is that those affected with an eating disorder and their families know that they are not alone and that they will have their needs met through early access to the appropriate specialised treatment services that they need and deserve.

### WE ARE:

A beacon of hope for recovery and freedom from eating disorders.

### OUR MISSION

*EDA exists to provide support, information and understanding to people with eating disorders as well as their families and friends. We endeavour to ensure that those struggling with an eating disorder know that they are not alone and that support and a non-judgemental, empathetic listening ear are always available. We strive to provide a safe space whereby individuals affected by eating disorders and their loved ones can feel listened to and supported.*

*We strive to ensure that people affected by eating disorders will have their needs met through the provision of timely, appropriate and integrated services delivered by a range of statutory and voluntary agencies. We support a multi-disciplinary approach for the treatment of eating disorders and strongly advocate for early and immediate intervention.*

*We endeavour to promote awareness of the illness amongst all sections of the community, amongst decision makers, politicians, civil servants, the voluntary sector and the general public.*

*EDA's ethos is that of hope and recovery and we are committed to fully supporting those affected by an eating disorder in their own individual journey of recovery from this illness.*

**Recovery is Always Possible**