

## Anorexia Nervosa

An eating disorder, as defined by the National Institute of Mental Health, is marked by an unhealthy change in eating patterns. It's a serious issue that involves dangerous perceptions of an individual's body image, leading to obsessions over weight. Thus, individuals are vulnerable to basing their self-worth on their image, focusing on any flaws. There are multiple types of eating disorders, but this research paper will look at Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, and Binge-eating.

Anorexia Nervosa, commonly just known as anorexia, is a type of eating disorder that involves the limited intake of calories, in fear of gaining weight. As stated by the Mayo Clinic, if this mental health condition is left untreated, then the individual is left in a dangerous position where they become vulnerable to physical harm or death. Due to the fixation on restrictive diets, this can lead to malnutrition when the patient isn't receiving enough nutrition, which is necessary in order for a person to be healthy. In fact, nutrients are needed for growth, the production of energy, and brain function. Without enough nutrients, individuals with anorexia may have difficulty doing every-day activities. This is supported by HealthTalk, which elaborated that individuals with anorexia often feel "drained" or "weak" both physically and mentally.

Anorexia can also be difficult to determine as weight looks different on everyone. Rather, some individuals with anorexia may not look very thin. According to John Hopkins Medicine, some common emotional symptoms of anorexia include the obsession with one's appearance, the fixation of food, and the extreme fear of gaining weight. Thus, this extreme behavior can be damaging to an individual's mental health, as it encourages a perceptual cycle of self-hate and harm. Consequently, as stated by the National Institute of Mental Health, mental-illnesses such as depression and anxiety have a high risk of co-occurring with eating disorders. The

overestimation of weight can cause distortions in the perception of one's body image, leading to increased feelings of guilt and anxiety over food.

Anorexia nervosa is incredibly dangerous and can become fatal. Furthermore, it can lead to potential long-term health issues. If you or any individuals you know are struggling with anorexia, you can contact the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders (ANAD) Helpline at 1 (888)-375-7767 for help or information relating to anorexia.

## References

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