

# Binge Eating Disorder (BED)

## Berkshire Eating Disorders Service (BEDS) Information Booklet

### What is Binge Eating Disorder (BED)?

Binge Eating Disorder comprises five main features/symptoms:

1. Binge episodes which are accompanied by **both** the following:
  - a) Eating much more than most people would in a discrete period of time, e.g. within 2-hours, given the same circumstance.
  - b) A feeling of lack of control during the episode of eating, e.g. not being able to stop eating or control what/how much is eaten.
2. The binge eating episodes have **3 or more** of the following:
  - a) Eating much more rapidly than normal
  - b) Eating until feeling uncomfortably full
  - c) Eating large amounts of food when not feeling physically hungry
  - d) Eating alone because of feeling embarrassed by how much one is eating
  - e) Feeling disgusted with oneself, depressed or very guilty afterwards
3. **Distress** regarding the presence of Binge Eating.
4. Binge eating happens **at least once a week for the last 3 months**.
5. There are **no compensatory behaviours** and bingeing does not occur during the course of Bulimia Nervosa or Anorexia Nervosa.

### General Signs and Symptoms:

- Buying lots of food
- Organising your life around bingeing episodes
- Hoarding food and eating in secret
- Eating very rapidly
- Eating when not hungry
- Eating until uncomfortably full
- Avoiding eating around others
- Social withdrawal and isolation
- Spending a lot or most of your time thinking about food
- Low confidence and self-esteem
- Feelings of shame and guilt after bingeing
- Compromise of education and employment plans

## Physical Impact:

There are several physical consequences associated with Binge Eating Disorder:

- Tiredness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Weight gain
- Bloating
- Constipation
- Stomach pain
- Other stomach problems
- Poor skin condition

Like any eating disorder, Binge Eating Disorder can have long-term physical effects, some of which may be permanent. These include:

- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Difficulty conceiving and infertility
- Joint and back pain
- Damage to the oesophagus and stomach
- Arthritis
- Gall bladder disease
- Sleep apnoea

You may require ongoing medical monitoring to minimise and/or detect physical health risks. Medical monitoring may include any of the following:

- Regular weight monitoring

## Facts and Figures:

- Studies show that Binge Eating Disorder is more prevalent than Anorexia Nervosa or Bulimia Nervosa.
- While Binge Eating Disorder can affect anyone, the condition tends to be more common in adults than in younger people, often starting in someone's 20s or older.
- 30% of people looking into weight-loss treatment likely meet the criteria for a diagnosis of Binge Eating Disorder.
- Binge Eating Disorder is common among people with diabetes.
- Dieting is a risk factor for the development of Binge Eating Disorder
- Studies suggest around a quarter of people with eating disorders are male.
- BEAT estimate that around 1.25 million people in the UK have an eating disorder



## Emotional Impact

Depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem are common difficulties for individuals with an eating disorder. Bingeing and chaotic eating may create chaos in your moods. You may experience difficulties in your relationships and feelings of loneliness, isolation or shame. Rigid rules and patterns of thinking are common and being preoccupied with weight/shape can have a significant emotional impact.

If you find yourself not coping or in crisis, please contact the number on the back page for support. You have made a positive step to support yourself by coming for treatment. Please remember that typically, all of the above start to improve as eating gets under control.

## In a crisis:

In our Service Booklet, you will find more details about useful contacts and resources. If you are experiencing an acute mental health problem or crisis, the below contacts will be able to help:

- Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHTT)
  - **0800 129 9999**

This is a mental health crisis team operating 24 hours a day across the whole of Berkshire.

- Samaritans 24/7 helpline
  - **116 123**
- SHOUT 24/7 text helpline
  - **Text SHOUT to 85258**
- BEAT (The UK's Eating Disorder Charity)
  - **0808 801 0677**

BEAT's helpline is open 365 days a year midday-midnight (Mon-Fri) and 4pm-midnight (weekends). BEAT also has a number of alternative ways to access support, such as a webchat service and email support line. You will find more details on their website [www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk).

**In an emergency, or if you feel at immediate risk, please call 999.**



## SHaRON (Support Hope and Recovery Online Network)

Have you signed up to SHaRON yet? Our Support, Hope and Recovery Online Network (SHaRON) is a safe and confidential space where users can seek support and advice from BEDS staff (available 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) as well as each other (24/7). In addition to live chats, blogs and discussion forums, a library of resources and podcasts are accessible on SHaRON. When you sign up, you will be added to a 'subnet' specifically for other individuals diagnosed with **Binge Eating Disorder**. This will allow you to connect with individuals who can relate to your experiences and develop an online community of hope and understanding.



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