



# Binge Eating Disorder

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Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is a type of eating disorder not otherwise specified and is characterized by recurrent binge eating without the regular compensatory behaviors seen in bulimia nervosa.

**Binge Eating Disorder** is characterized by:

- Frequent episodes of eating large quantities of food in short periods of time.
- Feeling out of control over eating behavior.
- Feeling ashamed or disgusted by the behavior.
- There are also several behavioral indicators of BED including eating when not hungry and eating in secret.

## **Health Consequences of Binge Eating Disorder:**

The health risks of BED are most commonly those associated with clinical obesity. Some of the potential health consequences of binge eating disorder include:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol levels
- Heart disease
- Diabetes mellitus
- Gallbladder disease

## **About Binge Eating Disorder:**

- The prevalence of BED is estimated to be approximately 1-5% of the general population.
- Binge eating disorder affects women slightly more often than men--estimates indicate that about 60% of people struggling with binge eating disorder are female, 40% are male (Smith et al., 1998).
- People who struggle with binge eating disorder can be of normal or heavier than average weight.
- BED is often associated with symptoms of depression.
- People struggling with binge eating disorder often express distress, shame, and guilt over their eating behaviors.

### **References:**

Smith, D.E., Marcus, M.D., Lewis, C.E., Fitzgibbon, M., Schreiner, P. (1998) Prevalence of binge eating disorder, obesity and depression in a biracial cohort of young adults. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 20, 227-232.

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For more information, contact the National Eating Disorders Association at 603 Stewart St., Suite 803, Seattle, WA 98101  
Information and Referral Helpline: 800-931-2237 or [www.NationalEatingDisorders.org](http://www.NationalEatingDisorders.org)

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