

Did You Know? A bimonthly column from:
Dr. Valerie Dripchak, PhD/LCSW
Student Assistance Counselor
Room# 236 Telephone# 236-9817

Do you know someone who has an eating disorder? Let's begin by understanding what an eating disorder is. The word "eating" in eating disorder means a set of eating habits and weight management practices. The word "disorder" refers to the eating related attitudes and behaviors that may result in a loss of self control; obsession, guilt or anxiety; alienation from others during eating; and physiological imbalances. Individuals who have eating disorders are men or women who may be underweight, overweight or within a normal weight range.

What causes an eating disorder? There has been a great deal of research about eating disorders, and it has become an acceptable fact that there is no single cause. The research suggests that eating disorders involve a complex set of interactions among social, cultural, biological and personal factors.

What are the warning signs? There are several signs that may indicate an eating disorder:

1. A significant increase or decrease in weight (not related to a medical condition).
2. The development of abnormal eating habits such as severe dieting, withdrawn or ritualized behavior at mealtime, or secretive bingeing.
3. An intense preoccupation with weight & body image.
4. Compulsive or excessive exercising.
5. Self-induced vomiting, periods of fasting, or laxative, diet pill, or diuretic abuse.
6. Feelings of isolation, depression or irritability.

Eating disorders can cause serious health problems and even death.

If you would like more information about this issue, you may contact ***your student assistance counselor. Please remember that the services are free and confidential.***

