

Eating Disorders Not Otherwise Specified (EDNOS)

There are variants of disordered eating that do not meet the diagnostic criteria for anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa. These are still eating disorders requiring necessary treatment. A substantial number of individuals with eating disorders fit into this category. Individuals with eating disordered behaviors that resemble anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa but whose eating behaviors do not meet one or more essential diagnostic criteria may be diagnosed with EDNOS. Examples include: individuals who meet criteria for anorexia nervosa but continue to menstruate, individuals who regularly purge but do not binge eat, and individuals who meet criteria for bulimia nervosa, but binge eat less than twice weekly, etc. Being diagnosed as having an "Eating Disorder not Otherwise Specified" does not mean that you are in any less danger or that you suffer any less.

Profile: "Not Otherwise Specified":

Having an "Eating Disorder not Otherwise Specified" can mean a variety of things. The sufferer may have symptoms of Anorexia but still have their menstrual cycle. It can mean the victim can still be an "average/normal weight" but still be suffering Anorexia. It can mean the victim equally participates in some Anorexic as well as Bulimic behaviors (referred to as Bulimiarexic by some).

The most important thing to remember is that Eating Disorders, Anorexia, Bulimia, Compulsive Overeating, or any combination of them, are all very serious psychological illnesses! They all have their physical dangers and complications. They all present themselves through a variety of disordered eating patterns. They stem from issues such as low self-esteem, a need to ignore emotional states such as depression, anger, pain, anger, and most of all. They have developed as a means to cope with one's current state. There is help and hope...

Diagnostic Criteria: EDNOS

The following definition of an Eating Disorder Not Otherwise Specified is meant to assist mental health professionals in making a clinical diagnosis. This clinical category of disordered eating is meant for those who suffer but do not meet all the diagnostic criteria for another specific disorder.

Examples Include:

1. All of the criteria for Anorexia Nervosa are met except the individual has regular menses.
2. All of the criteria for Anorexia Nervosa are met except that, despite substantial weight loss, the individual's current weight is in the normal range.
3. All of the criteria for Bulimia Nervosa are met except binges occur at a frequency of less than twice a week or for duration of less than 3 months.
4. An individual of normal body weight who regularly engages in inappropriate compensatory behavior after eating small amounts of food (e.g., self-induced vomiting after the consumption of two cookies).
5. An individual, who repeatedly chews and spits out, but does not swallow, large amounts of food.
6. Recurrent episodes of binge eating in the absence of the regular use of inappropriate compensatory behaviors characteristic of bulimia nervosa.

Summary:

The diagnosis of an eating disorder can be difficult. The boundaries between normal and disordered eating are difficult to delineate at times. Many individuals with clearly disordered eating do not meet the formal diagnostic criteria for one of the specific disorders and are classified as having Eating Disorder NOS. The failure to meet formal criteria does not necessarily mean that the individual does not have a serious and significant disorder. Formal evaluations for diagnosis and treatment should only be made by qualified mental health practitioners