

# COLLEGE STUDENTS & EATING DISORDERS

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## College Students and Eating Disorders: Diving into the Causes, Challenges, and Support Networks

College is often described as a time of newfound freedom, intellectual exploration, and personal growth. For many students, it's a period marked by possibility and excitement, yet the silent struggle of eating disorders affects a significant portion of the college population. Eating disorders can have a profound impact on students' physical health, emotional well-being, and academic performance.

### The Prevalence of Eating Disorders Among College Students

Research indicates that eating disorders are especially prevalent among young adults, and college students are at an increased risk. According to the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA), approximately 10-20% of women and 4-10% of men in college will struggle with an eating disorder at some point during their college years.

### Factors Contributing to Eating Disorders in College

Eating disorders have a tangled web of culprits, from genetics to societal pressures. College life throws in its own curveballs:

- The grind of academic pressure
- The mirror of social comparison
- The upheaval of new routines
- The whirlwind of stress and mental health

Eating disorders can have devastating consequences on both physical and mental health. They can wreak havoc on physical health, causing malnutrition, heart troubles, and even death. Mentally, they drag along bad characters like shame, isolation, and rock-bottom self-esteem, making it hard for students to ask for help. As for grades? They might nosedive due to brain fog, exhaustion, and missing classes.

### Breaking the Silence and Stigma

One major hurdle is the hush-hush attitude and stigma that cloak eating disorders on campus. Red flags include drastic weight changes, food obsession, social withdrawal, and excessive exercise. Friends, family, and campus heroes play a crucial role in spotting these signs and nudging students towards professional help found at the campus counseling center or obtaining a referral for an eating disorder specialist in the community.

**If you would like to get a FREE screening connect with Esperanza's Intake Coordinator, Dessimber Lauber at 210.253.9763**

**Or visit our website on the "Contact Us" page to review a list of questions and to fill out the online "Connect with Us" form to get in contact with our team.**

