

# What to Expect From Treatment

## TREATMENT PROCESS

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Many people utilize a treatment team to treat the multi-faceted aspects of an eating disorder. Treatment teams commonly include the following types of providers:

- Physician (primary care physician, pediatrician, cardiologist, etc.)
- Psychotherapist
- Dietitian
- Psychiatrist
- Additional therapists as required (yoga therapist, art therapist, etc.)
- Case manager at your insurance company (if needed)

A primary care physician, such as a pediatrician, internist, or family doctor, may have referrals to local therapists and dietitians who have experience in treating eating disorders, as might other specialists like adolescent medicine physicians and gynecologists. Not all areas have such clinicians available, nor are all physicians familiar with eating disorder treatment.

For dangerously underweight individuals, the first step is restoring normal eating patterns and returning to a healthy body weight for that person's individual shape and size. When someone is severely malnourished, it can be hard to make use of psychotherapy as the eating disorder interferes with a person's ability to concentrate and change patterns of behavior.

Although there may be exceptions, eating disorder treatment generally addresses the following factors in roughly this order:

1. Correct life-threatening medical and psychiatric symptoms
2. Interrupt eating disorder behaviors (food restriction, excessive exercise, binge eating, purging, etc.)
3. Establish normalized eating and nutritional rehabilitation
4. Challenge unhelpful and unhealthy eating disorder and ED-related thoughts and behaviors
5. Address ongoing medical and mental health issues
6. Establish a plan to prevent relapse

\*\*These statistics have been taken from [www.nationaleatingdisorder.org](http://www.nationaleatingdisorder.org)

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