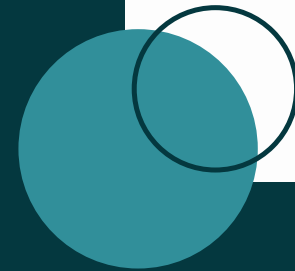


HKU OPEN DAY 2025 MOCK LECTURE



What is an Eating Disorder?

Presented by Professor Chan Wai Sze

Department of Psychology

Director of Sleep, Self-Regulation, and Health (SLASH) Laboratory



Key Topics

The spectrum of disordered eating

Myths about eating disorders

Contributors of eating disorders

Treatments




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*Eating is a behavior
influenced by a combination
of sociocultural,
environmental, biological,
and psychosocial factors*

”

***Disordered eating is not just a disorder of eating.
It is a dysregulation of internal and external demands on oneself.***

“



Eating Disorders

*A **persistent disturbance** of eating or eating-related behavior that results in the **altered consumption or absorption** of food that significantly **impairs physical health or psychosocial functioning***

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-5



ANOREXIA NERVOSA
厭食症

**Caloric
restriction
leading to low
body weight**

BULIMIA NERVOSA
暴食症

**Episodes of caloric
restriction and
overconsumption**

***Self-evaluation
is heavily
dependent on
one's weight
and/or shape***

Gender Ratio: 10F:1M
Age of Onset: Pre-adolescence to early adulthood

BINGE EATING DISORDER

***Recurring
episodes of
overconsumption
of food,
characterized by
a sense of loss of
control over
eating, leading to
distress and
impairments***

Gender Ratio: 2F:1M

Age of Onset: Adolescence/early adulthood



THE SPECTRUM OF DISORDERED EATING

15-50%

0.4-1.2%



Disordered eating

- Overeating in response to emotions, stress, environmental cues, etc.
- Much more common
- Less impairing but can also be distressing

Eating Disorders

- Less common
- Very distressing
- Associated with functional impairments
- Underlying psychopathology (comorbid depression/anxiety)

***Myths About
Eating
Disorders***



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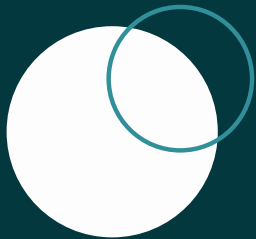
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What causes eating disorders?

Eating disorders are not caused by one single factor. They develop as a result of the interplay among a combination of sociocultural, bio-neurological, and psychosocial factors.



Contributors of eating disorders

Biological

Genetic influences
Neurological underpinnings

Sociocultural

Societal pressure to have a certain body type
Parental and peer pressure to conform to certain standards

Learning

Past experiences (such as eating to comfort oneself) become an habit

Emotional

Eating is used as a coping mechanism for uncomfortable emotions and sensations



Beliefs that maintain stress/emotional eating?




Eating helps me feel better (more relaxed, happier, comforted, rewarded)

Eating helps avoid negative emotions (numb my feelings, relieve my anxiety, distract me from my thoughts)


When I crave for a food, I have to eat it or the craving will become intolerable




***Eating
disorders and
disordered
eating can be
treated***



***Cognitive Behavioral
Therapy has been
found to be effective
in treating people
who have disordered
eating and eating
disorders***





CBT helps people identify the thoughts and behavioral patterns that maintain disordered eating, and replace them with more adaptive ways of coping

About 50 to 80% of people with eating disorders improved and recovered after receiving CBT



Take Home Messages

Eating disorders are treatable illnesses that can affect men and women of all ages.

Disordered eating refers to maladaptive eating behaviors that are common in the general population. If they become distressing or causing health issues or functional impairments, they can be treated as well.

People who have these problems are not lacking self-control or self-discipline. These problems are maintained by a combination of bio-psycho-social factors, that often require professional intervention.

For Further Information



SLASH Lab Instagram Account

For Participant Recruitment

HKU Psychological Service Unit

For more information about clinical services

<https://www.psu.hku.hk/>

My Webpage

For more information about my research

<https://psychology.hku.hk/people/chan-wai-size/>