

Eating disorders affect individuals in every age group, race, gender, and socioeconomic class



## Medicare Recipients


**15%**  
of eating disorder cases

**Higher rates of comorbidities:** arrhythmias, arthritis, thyroid conditions<sup>1</sup>

**Higher cost of treatment**  
(\$29,456 versus \$7,418)


## Socioeconomic Groups

Groups with faster rates of growth in eating disorders:<sup>2</sup>

-   Males
- Older individuals (44+)
- People in lower socioeconomic households

**28%**  
of multiethnic and low-income adolescents self-reported some form of disordered eating<sup>3</sup>

Eating disorder behaviors in these groups include:<sup>2</sup>

-   Self-induced vomiting
- Laxative and diuretic misuse

**Study participants:**  
**47%** Hispanic      **46%** African American

## Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is associated with higher rates of clinically significant eating disorder pathology<sup>4</sup>

High levels of food insecurity are associated with:<sup>5</sup>

- Higher levels of binge eating
- Higher likelihood of having any type of eating disorder
- Dietary restraint for any reason
- Weight self-stigma
- High levels of worry

**Individuals who suffer from food insecurity are almost four times more likely to experience bulimia nervosa<sup>6</sup>**

Adults who seek assistance from food pantries report higher eating disorder symptoms<sup>5</sup>

- Vomiting
- Laxative/diuretic use
- Fasting
- Intense exercise

## Limited Access to Care



Latino, African American, and Asian individuals with eating disorders utilize mental health services at lower rates than non-Latino Whites<sup>7</sup>

Individuals from non-affluent backgrounds had lower odds of receiving treatment for an eating disorder in comparison to affluent peers<sup>8</sup>

## Eating Disorders are Disabling

Eating disorders can cause some of the highest levels of medical and social disabilities of any psychiatric disorder.<sup>9</sup>



This infographic developed in partnership with



### Sources:

- Presskreischer, R., Steinglass, J., Anderson, K. (2022). Eating disorders in the U.S. Medicare population. *Int J Eat Disord.* <https://doi.org/10.1002/eat.23676>.
- Mitchison, D., Hay, P., Sleva-Younan, S. et al. The changing demographic profile of eating disorder behaviors in the community. *BMC Public Health* 14, 943 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-14-943>.
- Najjar RH, Jacob E, Evangelista L. Eating Behaviors, Weight Bias, and Psychological Functioning in Multi-ethnic Low-income Adolescents. *J Pediatr Nurs.* 2018 Jan-Feb;38:81-87. doi: 10.1016/j.pedn.2017.11.008. Epub 2017 Nov 16. PMID: 29167087.
- Becker, C., Middlemass, K., Johnson, C., Taylor, B., Gomez, F., & Sutherland, A. (2018). Traumatic event exposure associated with increased food insecurity and eating disorder pathology. *Public Health Nutrition*, 21(16), 3058-3066. doi:10.1017/S1368980018001738.
- Becker, C., Middlemass, K., Taylor, B., Johnson, C., Gomez, F. (2017). Food insecurity and eating disorder pathology. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 50(9), 1031-1040. doi: 10.1002/eat.22735.
- Hazzard VM, Barry MR, Leung CW, Sonnevile KR, Wonderlich SA, Crosby RD. Food insecurity and its associations with bulimic-spectrum eating disorders, mood disorders, and anxiety disorders in a nationally representative sample of U.S. adults [published online ahead of print, 2021 Jun 27]. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol.* 2021;1-8. doi:10.1007/s00127-021-02126-5.
- Marques, L, Alegria, M, Becker, AE, et al. Comparative prevalence, correlates of impairment, and service utilization for eating disorders across US ethnic groups: implications for reducing ethnic disparities in health care access for eating disorders. *Int J Eat Disord.* 2011;44(5):412-420. doi:10.1002/eat.20787.
- Sonneville, K. R., & Lipson, S. K. (2018). Disparities in eating disorder diagnosis and treatment according to weight status, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and sex among college students. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 51(6), 518-526. <https://doi.org/10.1002/eat.22846>.
- Klump KL, Bulik CM, Kaye WH, Treasure J, Tyson E. Academy for eating disorders position paper: eating disorders are serious mental illnesses. *Int J Eat Disord.* 2009 Mar;42(2):97-103. doi: 10.1002/eat.20589. PMID: 18951455.