

What should you do as a physician?

1. Assess:

- Review growth curve trends.
- Collect weight and eating history to identify unexplained changes.
- Blind weights are recommended until a weight protocol is established.
- Assess activity expenditure.
- Physical exam.
- Obtain vitals and EKG.
- Check labs (e.g. CBC, CMP, Mg, Phosphorus, TSH, U/A).

2. Follow-up:

Complete "Parent Information" steps:

- Food-Related Goals (e.g. increase caloric intake, schedule family meals, add food group).
- Activity-Related Goals (e.g. no exercise until X, break from sports practice, limit movement to 20 min walks with parent, add daily walk with parent).
- Make appropriate referrals.
- Schedule follow-up appt in 2 weeks to 3 months, depending on severity.
- Discuss relevant talking points provided in this brochure.

Screening Questions for Parents:

- Has your child seemed more interested in food, exercise, health, dieting or appearance?
- Have you noticed changes in your child's eating, exercise behaviors, and/or weight?
- Have you noticed changes in your child's mood or overall vitality?

Screening Questions for Child:

- How much time do you spend thinking about food, exercise, or your body?
- Do you try to control or change your weight/body? How?
- Do you feel guilty after eating?
- Does your weight, eating or exercise impact how you feel about yourself?

Talking points for families

- Parents do not cause eating disorders and children do not choose them. We must move away from blame and toward ACTION.
- The eating disorder is the biggest threat to an adolescent's growing autonomy, often rendering them unable to make decisions for their long term well-being.
- Parents are the experts on their children and retain responsibility for their children's health. They must often step-in to save their child from the eating disorder, gradually guiding them back to age-appropriate independence with food.
- It is normal for children with eating disorders to be afraid and resistant to healthy behaviors and the treatment process. This is a symptom of the illness.
- Early intervention is key and increases the likelihood of a sustainable recovery.

Tips for Physicians

Collaborate with the treatment team when setting target weights to ensure consistency.

Involve parents at each visit and give information to them, not just to the child.

Focus on parental strengths and empower them to make decisions about child's health.