

## Eating Disorders Program

### Central Zone

#### **Nova Scotia Health Eating Disorders Program**

Abbie J. Lane Memorial Building  
5909 Veterans' Memorial Lane  
3rd Floor, Room 3005  
Halifax, NS B3H 2E2

- › Phone: 902-473-6288
- › Fax: 902-473-6282

# Eating Disorders Program

## What is an eating disorder?

- An eating disorder is an illness that causes changes in your behaviours, thoughts, and feelings about food, weight, and exercise. It has both mental and physical symptoms.
- When a person has an eating disorder, they have trouble choosing foods that will help them to live a healthy life. **An eating disorder must be treated as soon as possible.** Having a bad relationship with food and activity can cause serious medical problems, including death. An eating disorder is serious, but is treatable.
- If your eating disorder causes you to not get enough nutrition, you may have physical symptoms, like:
  - › Osteoporosis (weak, thin bones)
  - › No longer having a period
  - › Gastrointestinal symptoms (like constipation [not being able to poop], bloating, feeling full too soon, nausea [feeling sick to your stomach], reflux [heartburn])
  - › Heart trouble (chest pain, shortness of breath [trouble breathing], heart racing or slowing)
- You are also more likely to have:
  - › Depression
  - › Obsessive, compulsive behaviours
  - › Addiction
  - › A personality disorder
  - › Low self-esteem
- An eating disorder can affect anyone. Eating disorders have many causes, including:
  - › Self-esteem and identity concerns
  - › Family factors
  - › Social pressures to be thin
  - › Cultural influences
  - › Problems coping with stress or trauma
  - › Too much dieting
- An eating disorder has less to do with food and eating, and more to do with how you see yourself.

## Some of the more common eating disorders include:

### Anorexia nervosa

- › Restricting food, which leads to extremely low body weight
- › Very strong fear of gaining weight, even if you are underweight
- › Preoccupied with body weight or shape, or not able to accept how serious your low body weight is
- There are 2 kinds of anorexia nervosa:
  - › **Binge-purge:** Regular bingeing (eating large amounts of food in a short time) or purging (vomiting [throwing up], laxatives [pills that help you poop], too much exercise) behaviours
  - › **Restricting:** No bingeing or purging behaviours

### Bulimia nervosa

- › Regular bingeing — This is when a person eats a lot of food in a short time, usually while feeling out of control. This is followed by feeling guilty and ashamed about what they have eaten, and feeling very physically full.
- › Regular purging behaviours (vomiting, laxatives, too much exercise)
- › You have been bingeing and purging at least once a week for 3 months.
- › Your opinion of yourself is influenced by your body size.
- There are 2 kinds of bulimia nervosa:
  - › **Purging**
  - › **Non-purging:** Making up for it in other ways, either by restriction (eating less after a binge) or exercising more

### Binge-eating disorder

- › Regular bingeing
- › Extreme (very bad) concern about the binge eating
- › You have been bingeing at least once a week for 3 months.
- › You do not make up for it in other ways (like purging, restriction, exercise, or diet pills/laxatives to lose weight).

## Other eating disorders

- **Atypical anorexia:** You have all of the symptoms of anorexia nervosa, but even though you have lost a lot of weight, your weight is within what is considered a “normal” range.
- **Purging disorder:** Purging without bingeing

## Avoidant or Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)

- › No interest in eating or food
- › Avoid eating because of the look, smell, flavour, taste, or texture of food
- › Worry about possible negative effects of eating, including fear of contaminated (spoiled or not cooked correctly) food, choking, nausea, or vomiting
- › Significant weight loss
- › Using laxatives for stomach (belly) discomfort
- › Affects daily living and socializing

## What is the Central Zone (CZ) Eating Disorders Program?

- We help people 18 years old and older with:
  - › Anorexia nervosa
  - › Bulimia nervosa
  - › Binge-eating disorder
  - › Other eating disorders, including atypical anorexia nervosa, purging disorder, ARFID, and more.
- The program offers:
  - › Assessment
  - › Day program
  - › Outpatient therapy
  - › Inpatient treatment
- For more information, please use the QR code, or the link below, or ask a member of your health care team for pamphlet 2304, *Eating Disorder Inpatient Program*:
  - › [www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/2304](http://www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/2304)

Scan the QR code on your smartphone (open the camera on your smartphone, point the camera at the code, and tap the banner or border that appears)



## Outpatient treatment options

- There are 2 outpatient treatment options:
  - › CBT-T (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy-Ten)
  - › Day Program
- CBT-T is a series of up to 10 sessions that are done on an individual or group basis.
- The Day Program is a 10-week program of in-person groups and meals at the Eating Disorders Program.
- Some individual treatment is available online.

## Who is the program for?

- **Outpatient therapy** is available to people who have an eating disorder and who:
  - › Are 18 years old or older
  - › Live in central zone (Halifax area, Eastern Shore, and West Hants)
- The **Day Program** is available to people who have an eating disorder (based on assessment and care needed) and who:
  - › Are 18 years old or older
  - › Live anywhere in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, or Prince Edward Island

## What does the treatment include?

### CBT-T

- CBT-T is for people who have a body mass index (BMI) of at least 17.5. Most people enter outpatient treatment through CBT-T. This is a series of **up to 10 sessions**, followed by 2 follow-up sessions. Sessions can be done on an **individual** or **group** basis.
- CBT-T will help you learn to make changes to your eating, behaviours, and your reactions. These changes help you to overcome your fears about eating and your body.
- We encourage you to make changes early in your treatment and to work at your recovery between sessions. This will help the changes to last long-term.

- CBT-T has several parts:
  - › Following a regular, healthy eating routine and coping with your anxiety about food
  - › Changing your beliefs about food
  - › Learning to deal with emotions that cause eating problems
  - › Developing a more positive body image and accepting your body
  - › Making sure you stay well

## Day Program

- The Day Program is for:
  - › People who need a different type of support than what is provided through CBT-T
  - › People who have done the inpatient program
- The program is 10 weeks long. It takes place at the Abbie J. Lane Memorial Building at the QEII Health Sciences Centre in Halifax. Sessions are run by a team of health care providers, including:
  - › Psychologists
  - › Psychiatrist
  - › Nurses
  - › Occupational Therapist
  - › Dietitian
- New people can enter the program at any time. You **do not** have to wait for a new session to start.
- Sessions are:
  - › Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday.
- You will eat your meals and snacks at the Clinic during sessions. You will be responsible for your own meals and snacks on the weekends.
- The main goal of the Day Program is to normalize eating, activity, and weight by:
  - › Taking part in meals, snacks, and group education sessions
  - › Taking part in a weekly case management meeting, where you will be weighed, and set your goals for the week
  - › Keeping a food journal to record what you eat

## Who is on my health care team?

Health care providers in the Program include:

- › Psychologists
- › Occupational Therapist
- › Nurses
- › Dietitian
- › Psychiatrist

## What will happen at meals and snack times?

- While you are attending the Day Program, you will get 3 meals and 2 snacks a day. You will also be expected to eat a third snack at home in the evenings. Meals may include hot and cold breakfasts, lunches, suppers, BBQ meals, going to restaurants, and theme meals.
- You will take part in planning and preparing meals, eating, and cleaning up.
- We encourage you to set food-related goals.
- At the end of each meal, we encourage you to talk about your eating experience, share your feelings and concerns, and get support. We hope that this support will help you to become more comfortable and confident in everyday eating situations.

## Day Program Groups

### DBT Skills

- This group has 4 parts, as well as homework to do on your own. You will learn:
  - › Ways to deal with your eating disorder urges and behaviours
  - › Self-care activities, like learning how to improve your sleep and develop leisure activities (hobbies)
  - › Skills related to handling stress, relationships, emotion regulation, and mindfulness

### Process Group

- In this group, you can give feedback to staff and other group members, and deal with any concerns you may have about them.

### Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT) Group

- This group focuses on learning to identify, name, and express your emotions in a group.

## **Nutrition Topics and Meal and Grocery Planning Group**

- These groups will help you learn about healthy eating and how to create a healthy relationship with food. You will learn:
  - › How to feed yourself based on your nutritional needs
  - › About food myths and eating disorder behaviours
  - › How to set up a kitchen, plan meals, and follow recipes
  - › How healthy eating can help your recovery

## **Yoga and Recreation Group**

- This group will help you to use recreation to improve your health and well-being. You will learn how to find meaningful activities (like crafts, museum visits, concerts, and outdoor activities) and take part in those activities, both in the Program and in the community.

## **Finding Purpose Group**

- This group will help you explore your values. Setting goals that line up with your values is an important part of your recovery. Learning to set and reach your goals will lead you to a more balanced and meaningful life.

## **Body Image Group**

- This group will help you to build a healthier way of looking at your body through:
  - › Learning about positive body image and body acceptance
  - › Methods like self-monitoring and mirror exposure
- You will raise your awareness of your negative thoughts and emotions, and learn ways to accept and have compassion for your body.

## **What's Eating You Group**

- This group is a space to talk about issues in your daily life. We encourage you to share your thoughts, identify and express your emotions, and explore new ways of coping. You will also do exercises to address your emotional needs and concerns.

## **Personal or homework time**

- Between group time and meals, you will have time to:
  - › Do your homework
  - › Do self-care activities (like reading, crafts)
  - › Go to appointments



## What is expected of me while I am working with the CZ Eating Disorders Program?

- Group sessions are confidential (private). **Do not talk about what was talked about in group outside of group sessions.** Please respect everyone's personal information (even if you do not use the person's name). All health care team members will respect your right to confidentiality.
- You are expected to attend and be on time for all meals and groups. **If you are going to be late or cannot make it to a session, tell a member of your health care team ahead of time, or call:**
  - › Phone: 902-473-6288
- If you miss 3 sessions of a group in a row, you may be discharged from the Program.
- You are expected to eat all of your meals and snacks.
- You are expected to **not** go to the bathroom right after a meal or snack. If you have an urge to do this, please talk to a member of your health care team about ways to cope.
- You are expected to **not** eat or drink during group sessions. Diet foods (labelled as low calorie or fat free) are not allowed in the Clinic.
- You will be weighed each week during your case management meeting. Your case manager will talk with you about your progress during this meeting.
- You are expected to take part in group sessions (by talking during groups, doing homework, taking risks to lower and stop your eating behaviours) and following the program rules. If you do not follow these rules, you may be discharged from the program.
- You are expected to let each person talk without interrupting, and listen carefully and respectfully. Abusive behaviour will **not** be tolerated.
- You are expected to **not** abuse substances (like alcohol or drugs) while you are in the program.
- You are strongly encouraged **not** to spend time with other group members outside of the program. The support you get from other group members is important in your treatment. Sometimes these relationships can get too close. It is important to have good boundaries so that you can stay focused on your recovery goals.

Staff are **not** available after 6 p.m. on weekdays, or on weekends.

**If it is an emergency:**

- Call the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Line.
  - › Phone (toll-free): 1-888-429-8167

or

- Call 911.

or

- Go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.

**Common questions:**

**I do not live in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Where do I stay when taking part in the Day Program?**

- If you live outside of HRM, the hospital will arrange for you to have free accommodations.

**Who will provide my medical care while I am taking part in outpatient therapy or the Day Program?**

- While you are attending the Day Program, you may meet with a psychiatrist.
- For ongoing medical care, you must call your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner).

**How do I get referred to the program?**

- You can self-refer by calling the Mental Health and Addictions Intake:
  - › Phone (toll-free): 1-855-922-1122
- You can be referred by your primary health care provider.

It is easier to treat an eating disorder if it is found early. If you are worried that you might have an eating disorder, talk with your primary health care provider right away.

| <b>Monday</b>                                  | <b>Tuesday</b>                                       | <b>Wednesday</b>                              | <b>Thursday</b>                           | <b>Friday</b>                                 | <b>Saturday</b>                 | <b>Sunday</b> |
|--|--|---|---|---|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Breakfast<br>8 a.m.                            | Breakfast<br>8 a.m.                                  | Breakfast<br>8 a.m.                           | Breakfast<br>8 a.m.                       | Breakfast<br>8 a.m.                           | Personalized plan               |               |
| DBT Skills<br>9 a.m.                           | Process<br>Group<br>9 a.m.                           | Yoga and<br>Mindfulness<br>9:30 a.m.          | Personal or<br>homework<br>time<br>9 a.m. | What's<br>Eating You<br>9:30 a.m.             | Meals and snacks<br>on your own |               |
|  | Emotion<br>Focused<br>Therapy<br>(EFT)<br>10:15 a.m. | Meal and<br>Grocery<br>Planning<br>10:30 a.m. |   | Personal or<br>homework<br>time<br>10:30 a.m. |                                 |               |
| Lunch<br>11 a.m.                               | Sandwich<br>lunch<br>11:30 a.m.                      | Boxed lunch<br>11:45 a.m.                     | Prepped<br>lunch<br>11 a.m.               | Boxed<br>lunch<br>11:45 a.m.                  |                                 |               |
| Yoga<br>(every<br>second<br>week)<br>1:30 p.m. | Finding<br>Purpose<br>1 p.m.                         | Relationships<br>Group<br>1 p.m.              | Body Image<br>Group<br>1:30 p.m.          | Personal or<br>homework<br>time<br>1 p.m.     |                                 |               |
|  | Nutrition<br>Group<br>2:30 p.m.                      | Recreation<br>Group<br>2:15 p.m.              |   |   |                                 |               |
| Personal or<br>homework<br>time<br>1 p.m.      |  |   |   |   |                                 |               |
| Supper<br>meal prep<br>4 p.m.                  | Supper<br>meal prep<br>4 p.m.                        | Supper meal<br>prep<br>4 p.m.                 | Supper<br>meal prep<br>4 p.m.             | Supper<br>meal prep<br>4 p.m.                 |                                 |               |
| Supper<br>5 p.m.                               | Supper<br>5 p.m.                                     | Supper<br>5 p.m.                              | Supper<br>5 p.m.                          | Supper<br>5 p.m.                              |                                 |               |

Please note this schedule may change.

## Notes:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:  
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:  
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

*Prepared by: Eating Disorder Clinic*  
*Designed by: Nova Scotia Health Library Services*

WM85-1714 © November 2023 Nova Scotia Health Authority  
The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.