



Patient & Family Guide

2025

# Assessment for Eating Disorders in Adults



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# Assessment for Eating Disorders in Adults

## What will happen before the assessment?

- An eating disorder assessment can be done:
  - › In person at your local mental health clinic**or**
  - › Virtually (online)

Please let us know what you would prefer.

- The Nova Scotia Eating Disorder Service recommends everyone who is assessed for an eating disorder have a physical exam. This is usually done by your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner). **Please book this appointment as soon as you can.**
- The physical exam will include:
  - › Taking your vital signs (blood pressure, heart rate, temperature)
  - › Measuring your height and weight
  - › Checking other physical health indicators
- It is also recommended you have blood work and an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) to check your heart.

## **If you do not have a primary health care provider:**

- › We recommend you go to a walk-in clinic or a primary care clinic that provides short-term primary medical care for people on the Need a Family Practice Registry.
- › Your appointment may be in-person or online. **Primary care clinics do not offer walk-in services. All appointments must be booked in advance.**
- Please arrive 5 minutes before your appointment to register.
- An assessment usually takes about 1 to 1 ½ hours.

### **If you need to cancel an appointment:**

- › **You must give at least 24 hours (1 day) notice.**

Call your local mental health clinic to cancel the appointment and tell them if you would like to reschedule. They will contact you when another appointment is available.

## **What should I bring to the assessment?**

- Any medical records or older assessments that you think may help, if available
- A list of all your current medications, including:
  - › Drops
  - › Puffers and inhalers
  - › Patches
  - › Injections
  - › Creams and ointments
  - › Herbal products and vitamins
  - › Over-the-counter and prescription medications
- Any questions or concerns you have
- A weight scale (if your appointment is virtual)

## **What will happen during the assessment?**

- The assessment will help our team learn about you:
  - › Medical history
  - › Eating behaviours
  - › Emotions (feelings)
  - › Thoughts about eating and body image
- A mental health clinician will go over what will happen during the assessment. They will review consent with you and document your decision.
- If you are being seen in person, we will measure your height and weight. If you are being seen virtually, we will ask you to measure your height and weight during the assessment. We also ask that you be weighed by your primary health care provider.
- The clinician will spend some time to understand the emotional and psychological parts of your eating disorder. They may also ask you to fill out questionnaires.
- You may invite a support person to join you. The clinician can help you decide how you want to involve them in your assessment.

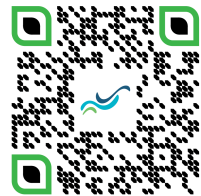
- We will offer support and teach you about eating disorders. It is very important for your recovery to understand eating disorders, including:
  - › How they work
  - › What effects they can have
  - › Treatment options
- During your assessment, we may find that you need services other than the Nova Scotia Eating Disorder Service for your main mental health concern. If this happens, we will help you connect to the right clinician and treatment for your needs.

## **What will happen after the assessment?**

- After the assessment, or in a follow-up session, the clinician will go over the results. They will talk with you about treatment options, like:
  - › Therapy
  - › Nutritional counselling
  - › Medical monitoring (checking your blood pressure, pulse, height, and weight, and ordering tests, like blood work or an electrocardiogram, if needed)

- The clinician will recommend the treatment that is right for you and medical monitoring. **It is important to follow these recommendations and book appointments with your primary health care provider.**
- Once a treatment is chosen, you will be referred to a clinician who specializes in that treatment.
- You may have to wait for treatment. We will call you when the clinician becomes available.
- For more information, ask a member of your health care team for pamphlet 2296, *When should I be worried about my relationship with food and exercise?*, scan the QR code below, or visit:
  - › [www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/2296](http://www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/2296)

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



# Notes:

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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 all patient education resources here:  
[www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources](http://www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources)

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

*Prepared by: Nova Scotia Eating Disorder Provincial Service  
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Learn more: <https://library.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources>