

When should I be worried about my relationship with food and exercise?

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Having a good relationship with food and exercise is important for your physical and mental health.

Good nutrition helps your brain and body work well.

Think about your relationship with food.

Answer the questions below.

- Does food make you feel stressed?
- Do you feel guilty after you eat?
- Do you start to eat and cannot stop?
- Are you always questioning your food choices?
- Do you not let yourself eat foods you enjoy?
- Do you have rules about your eating?
- Do thoughts about food take up a lot of your attention?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you may have an unhealthy relationship with food.

If you are worried about your relationship with food, ask for help.

Exercising too much or for the wrong reason can be a warning sign of an eating disorder. Exercise should be fun and flexible.

Think about your relationship with physical activity. Answer the questions below.

- Why are you exercising?
- Is exercise something you feel you must do?
- Have you noticed a change in how much you exercise (more often or longer)?
- Are you exercising more, but enjoying it less?
- Does your exercise routine have rules that cannot be broken?
- Does exercise interfere with your other activities or priorities (like work, school, or time with friends)?
- If you cannot exercise, do you feel bad about yourself or guilty?
- Do you exercise so hard you get injured or keep exercising even when you have an injury?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you may have an unhealthy relationship with exercise.

If you are worried about your relationship with exercise, ask for help.

Changes in your eating or exercise can be warning signs of an eating disorder. These changes can lead to problems with your physical and mental health.

Eating disorders are not a choice.
Recovery is possible and help is available.
You are not alone.

The sooner an eating disorder is found, the easier it is to treat. If you are worried that you might have an eating disorder:

- › Talk with your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) right away.

OR

- › Call Nova Scotia Mental Health and Addictions to refer yourself for treatment.
- › Phone (toll-free): 1-855-922-1122

Resources

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia

- › <https://eatingdisordersns.ca/>

National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC) - Canada

- › <https://nedic.ca/>

National Eating Disorders Association - United States

- › www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your health care provider. We are here to help you.

Looking for more health information?

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

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

www.nshealth.ca

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The information in this pamphlet is for informational and educational purposes only.

The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.