

Help and Support

You should make sure your GP knows whether a course of treatment they suggest has been helpful or not. Further information about treatment can be found at the national charity B-eat's website at www.b-eat.co.uk/get-help/about-eating-disorders/information-sheets.

They also produce a leaflet called 'The Path Through Treatment'.

NIWE Eating Distress Service is happy to provide information on other sources of help, including our own services where appropriate, currently available to people living in North Tyneside and Newcastle.

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NIWE Eating Distress Service



▶ Talking to your GP or health professional about an eating problem

NIWE Eating Distress Service

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Talking to your GP

If you have an eating problem, it is important to try to talk to your GP or another health professional. The GP is responsible for your health care and may be able to help you or refer you for any specialist help. Your appointment will be confidential.

If you do not feel able to talk to your GP, you could try talking to a practice nurse, another GP in the practice or a mental health worker. If you feel there is no GP in the practice you can talk to, you could consider changing your GP practice.

Where to start

When you go in to your appointment, it can be hard to know where to start. People are often nervous about talking to a GP, and especially about an eating disorder. You are not alone in this. It is important to try to give clear information about your eating problem and how it is affecting you.

It may help to write down the points you want to make so you don't forget anything. If there is someone who can go with you, this might help too, but many people are not in this position.

Practice Nurse

Sometimes talking to a practice nurse may feel easier as a first step. It is important not to be put off if the response you receive at first does not seem helpful to you. Your eating problem should be taken seriously, even if the health professional suggests keeping an eye on things at first. If this is the case they should agree to see you again in a specified period to see how you are getting on.

If you feel your problem has not been treated as seriously as you would like, you should speak to someone else about it. It is important not to try to forget about it or minimise it. Access to help at an early stage means you may be able to recover more quickly, and you are entitled to help for an eating disorder, according to Government guidelines (www.nice.gov.uk).

Treatment

If your health professional suggests a course of treatment, try to ask what this will involve so that you can understand how it will help and so that any worries or concerns you may have can be addressed. Sometimes medication may be suggested, or seeing a practice counsellor.

An eating problem is a way of coping with feelings as well as a set of behaviours with food. You may have attitudes about your body too. All of these are relevant to work on at some stage in your path to recovery.

Your health professional may refer you outside of the NHS to an organisation in the voluntary sector. There may be health professionals there too, or accredited counsellors who will help you.

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