

# Children and young people with eating disorders

## Guidelines for primary care professionals

These guidelines share advice about spotting the signs of eating disorders and when to refer children and young people to the community eating disorders service (CEDS) for specialist outpatient support.



Healthy London Partnership

healthylondon.org

### CONSENT:

- Are both the young person & parent(s) aware of this referral?
- Who has given consent to this referral?



### Remember to refer ALL suspected children and young people with eating disorders to your local CEDS

- History of weight loss (> 1kg a week for 2 consecutive weeks) or failure to gain weight
- If no weight available has clothes size changed?
- Have parents noticed weight loss?
- How long has the young person been trying to lose weight & what have they tried?
- If they are bingeing, vomiting, using laxatives, how often in a week?
- How much are they currently eating & drinking?
- Are they over exercising?
- If appropriate, when did they last have a menstrual cycle?
- Any risks?



### Include the physical exam

- Weight and height
- BP and pulse (sitting and standing)
- Temperature
- Send for baseline blood tests at the same time as referral: FBC, U+E's, LFT, Glucose, ESR, TFT, bone profile, Calcium, Magnesium
- DO NOT DELAY REFERRAL WAITING FOR RESULTS!



### Children and young people DO NOT need to be exceptionally underweight for a referral

- 'Low weight' is now defined as a loss of 10% of a young person's expected body weight



### When to refer

Refer ALL Children and Young People with a suspected eating disorder to your local CEDS

- Anxiety about gaining weight - behaviours to lose weight that are more than a 'teenage diet' such as extreme restricting or frequent bingeing
- Low, normal or overweight with the above behaviours
- Fainting, dehydration and confusion



### Timescales

- Urgent assessment will be within 5 days
- 15 days if routine NICE concordant treatment within 28 days (note this is primarily family based treatment rather than individual)

### RED FLAGS

Phone your local CYP CEDS immediately

- not eating and fluid refusal for more than 24 hours
- cardiovascular compromise and fainting
- BMI <13; under 0.2nd centile
- BP <0.4th centile
- Pulse <40 bpm sitting and standing/postural drop
- Temperature <35°C
- Weight loss > 1kg a week for 2 consecutive weeks

# Eating disorders. Know the first signs?



## Lips

Are they obsessive about food?



## Flips

Is their behaviour changing?



## Hips

Do they have distorted beliefs about their body size?



## Kips

Are they often tired or struggling to concentrate?



## Nips

Do they disappear to the toilet after meals?



## Skips

Have they started exercising excessively?

## Online support

Visit [beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://beateatingdisorders.org.uk) for information about eating disorders, and to access online support groups and one-to-one chat.

Use [helpfinder.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://helpfinder.beateatingdisorders.org.uk) to find services in your area.

@BeatEDSupport

BeatEDSupport

[beat.eating.disorders](https://www.facebook.com/beat.eating.disorders)

**Beat is the UK's eating disorder charity.  
We are a champion, guide and friend  
for anyone affected by an eating disorder.**

LONDON COMMUNITY EATING DISORDER SERVICES	CONTACT
Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)	020 3315 3369
East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT)	020 7426 2556
North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT)	0300 555 1216
Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust	020 7794 0500 ext 39930
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM)	020 3228 2545
South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust (SWLSTG)	020 3513 6793
West London NHS Trust	020 8354 8160



**For more referral information:** [helpfinder.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/refer](http://helpfinder.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/refer)