“College should be a place where you are able to grow, expand your horizons and learn who you are. My eating disorder did not allow me to have those college experiences because it kept me from truly knowing myself.”

- Recovered individual reflecting on her eating disorder in college

Concerned about Someone? Here’s What to look for:

Signs and Symptoms
Someone struggling with an eating disorder may or may not exhibit some or all of these symptoms. If you or someone you know exhibits some or all of these symptoms they should be assessed by a clinician or trained professional.
- Dramatic weight loss/gain in a relatively short period of time
- Belief that thinness will bring happiness
- Isolation; fear of eating with or around others
- Using exercise as an excuse to miss out on pleasurable activities
- Compulsive exercise; over-exercising; exercising when physically exhausted
- Not eating or eating when not physically hungry
- Food restriction and self starvation; lying about eating habits
- Binging (eating large quantities of food in one sitting) and/or purging (throwing up or over-exercising)
- Body hatred; constantly complaining about appearance
- Mood swings, depression, fatigue
- Low self-esteem, feeling worthless, often putting themselves down and/or complaining of being “too stupid” or “too fat”
- Obsession with calories, fat and/or weight; categorizing food as “good” or “bad”; feeling out of control around food
- Insomnia; poor sleeping habits
- Hair loss, dizziness, headaches; lack of concentration
- Loss of menstrual cycle
- Perfectionist personality; unrealistic or idealistic self-standards

Finding Help on Campus

There are many places to turn for help on your campus. If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, consider contacting any of the following:

- Residence Hall Staff
- Faculty Member
- Counseling Center
- Health Services
- Coach
- Physician
- Women’s Resource Center
- Support Groups (both on- campus and within the community)

Information compiled from Kathy Hotelling’s, Ph. D. “Eating Disorders on Campus” by the Multi-service Eating Disorder Association, Inc. Copyright © 2002 [MEDA] All rights reserved
“What a relief to find a safe space to share the pain, healing and recovery. Thank you MEDA for a supportive, loving place to grow!”

-College student from a MEDA support group

Dedicated to the prevention, education, and treatment of eating disorders and based on a model of full recovery, MEDA instills hope by providing innovative services and critical resources to clients, professionals, and educators.

MEDA’s Programs & Services

- Assessments and referrals
- Support groups for adolescents and teens
- Groups for loved ones of those with eating disorders
- Open forum offering presentations from recovered individuals
- Education presentations, trainings and resource materials
- Eating Disorder Awareness Week activities
- Annual National Conference
- Award-winning comprehensive educational website
- College networking meetings for faculty & students
- Clinical services for individuals with eating disorders and their loved ones

15% of women ages 17-24 have disordered eating.

91% of women in college have attempted to control their weight through dieting.

54% of men are unhappy with their appearance and wish their bodies were different.

5-10 million women and 1 million men struggle with anorexia and bulimia and up to 25 million struggle with binge eating disorder.

Aspects of the College Environment that can Contribute to Disordered Eating & Eating Disorders

- The difficulty adjusting to a transitional period
- Academic and financial stress
- Fear of the “Freshman 15”
- The atmosphere of a cafeteria/dining hall with unlimited amounts of food
- The semi-closed nature of colleges can intensify the pressure to be thin
- Participation in sports where weight and appearance are perceived to affect success

in partnership with: McLean Hospital
Klarman Eating Disorder Center