

## To Learn More:

### Books

#### **Wasted: A Memoir of Anorexia & Bulimia**

by Marya Hornbacher, 1998

#### **Eating Disorders: Anorexia & Bulimia**

by Rachel Kubersky, 1996

#### **Surviving an Eating Disorder: Strategies for Family and Friends**

by M. Siegel, J. Brisman, and M. Weinshel, 1997

#### **Surviving an Eating Disorder: Strategies for family and Friends**

by M. Siegel, J. Brisman, and M. Weinshel, 1977

### Websites

[www.anebquebec.com](http://www.anebquebec.com)

[www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com)

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

## **Help for Eating Disorders in Montreal**

- ❑ *Montreal Children's Hospital (Psychiatry): 514-412-4449*
- ❑ *St. Justine Hospital: 514-345-4695*
- ❑ *Douglas Hospital Eating Disorder Program: 514-761-6131 ext. 2895*
- ❑ *McGill University Eating Disorders Program: 514-398-1050*
- ❑ *Quebec Association for Persons Suffering from Anorexia and Bulimia (ANEB): 514-630-0907*
- ❑ *BACA Eating Disorders Clinic (Private): 514-544-2323*

AMI-Quebec has many programs to help families and people suffering from mental illness. If you recognize yourself or someone you care about in this pamphlet, please contact us and we will direct you to an appropriate resource.

514-486-1448  
www.amiquebec.org  
outreach@amiquebec.org

# EATING DISORDERS



**AMI-Québec**  
*Action on Mental Illness*

6875 Decarie, Suite 300  
Montreal, Quebec H3W 3E4  
Phone: (514) 486-1448  
Fax: (514) 486-6157

Email: [outreach@amiquebec.org](mailto:outreach@amiquebec.org)  
Website: [www.amiquebec.org](http://www.amiquebec.org)

**L**inda thought it was just a diet, but she almost died. At age 17, Linda weighed 127 lbs. One day her friend told her that her new jeans made her thighs look big. She was teasing, but Linda took it seriously and started dieting.

First, Linda skipped breakfast. In the spring, when everybody started wearing shorts, she stopped having lunch. She obsessively weighed her food and counted calories. By summer, she was barely eating at all; she had lost a lot of weight. She was always cold and all her joints hurt. While her friends and parents worried that she was starving herself to death, Linda was still disgusted by the "ripples of fat" she saw on her legs and stomach. She refused to see a doctor until one day she fainted and cut her forehead while shopping with her friends. The emergency room doctor recognized that Linda had anorexia nervosa and immediately admitted her to hospital. With treatment for both the emotional and physical symptoms, Linda, through hard work and therapy, recovered.

Dieting has become a fad for young people who are trying to achieve the "perfect look". For some this may develop into an eating disorder, an illness in which they become obsessed with food and with their body weight. Teenage and college age women are most at risk. However, teenage boys and men are also at risk for developing eating disorders.

## \* Anorexia Nervosa

Anorexia is a fear of gaining weight and is diagnosed when patients lose at least 15% of their weight in a short period of time. People with anorexia don't maintain a normal weight because they refuse to eat enough, and sometimes use laxatives or force themselves to vomit. Over time they develop symptoms of starvation. Friends and family should encourage their loved ones to get help as soon as they see any of the following

### \*warning signs\*

- ✓ loses a great deal of weight in a relatively short period
- ✓ continues to diet though extremely thin
- ✓ reaches a diet goal and immediately sets another goal for more weight loss
- ✓ is dissatisfied with his or her appearance; claims to be fat
- ✓ stops menstruating
- ✓ develops eating rituals: eats small amounts of food, cuts things into tiny pieces, or measures everything
- ✓ exercises obsessively
- ✓ appears depressed much of the time and loses interest in social activities
- ✓ feels worthless and hopeless

## \* Bulimia Nervosa

Although they may frequently diet or vigorously exercise, individuals with bulimia are usually of normal weight or are somewhat overweight. They frequently have severe eating binges followed by purging (induced vomiting, use of laxatives) at least twice a week for at least three months in a row. Many people don't know when a family member or friend has bulimia because victims binge behind closed doors and they often don't lose significant amounts of weight.

Bulimia can cause teeth to decay because of the constant exposure to stomach acid. It can also cause kidney problems and dehydration.

### \*warning signs\*

- ✓ eats a lot of food over a short period of time and then vomits
- ✓ diets and exercises often but maintains or regains weight
- ✓ is preoccupied with weight and food
- ✓ disappears into the bathroom for long periods of time
- ✓ appears depressed much of the time
- ✓ has scars on back of hands or fingers from forced vomiting
- ✓ cheeks and face may become puffy