

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for April 12, 2021
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about eating disorders and look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

This week I was asked to talk with a small group of students about resources related to eating disorders. Researching this topic was very eye-opening for me, so I wanted you to share this information with you as well.

There are three main types of eating disorders: anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder (BED). The National Alliance on Mental Illness explains that people with eating disorders are preoccupied with food and weight issues to the point that they find it difficult to focus on other aspects of their lives. Those with anorexia deny themselves food to the point of self-starvation as they obsess about weight loss. Very low food intake and inadequate nutrition cause a person to become very thin. There are two common subtypes of anorexia: binge-purge type and restrictive type.

Those with bulimia will feel out of control when binging on very large amounts of food during short periods of time, and then desperately try to rid themselves of the extra calories using forced vomiting, abusing laxatives, or excessive exercise. In contrast after an episode of binge eating, a person with BED does not attempt to purge or exercise excessively like someone living with anorexia or bulimia would.

According to the Academy for Eating Disorders, 28.8 million or roughly 9 percent of Americans will have an eating disorder in their lifetime. Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. There is one death every 52 minutes as a direct result of an eating disorder.

This can be a complicated subject. Being educated and aware is an important first step. Here are some signs to look for that might indicate a friend or loved one may have an eating disorder:

- Restriction of food intake
- Bingeing on food when upset
- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Purging behaviors (spending a lot of time in the bathroom)

- Excessive exercise
- Eating in private
- Focus on weight or appearance

One of the best forms of prevention is to encourage healthy body images of ourselves and those around us. The Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association encourage parents, teachers, and others to be aware of body image in children and adolescents. This starts with a genuine appreciation for all your body can do. This vehicle allows us to participate in the world- to see and hear and touch and smell and taste. We have been fearfully and wonderfully made.

Sometimes we need to be reminded that beauty is not skin-deep. We may know it in our heads, but do we know this in our hearts? What would our children or grandchildren observe in us? One place to start is to become a critical viewer of social and media messages. Remind children and teens that TV is not real life. Regular family meals are also an incredible way to promote a positive body image. Including children in meal preparation can get them excited and empower them about what they are eating. Never tease a child about their appearance. Comments that adults may feel are innocent and fun can be especially hurtful when tweens and teens are already self-conscious about their bodies.

There are many resources available for people who have an eating disorder. One is to text “CONNECT” to the Crisis Textline at 741-741. You can also search for the National Eating Disorders Association Helpline or the local Allwell Behavioral Health Services Crisis Hotline.

The “East Ohio Women in Agriculture Program Series” continues next Thursday, with “Reaching your educational goals.” Webinars and field days are being held through July on a variety of financial, production, and home-related topics to help women in agriculture. Visit our website to register for these free programs or to find a link to recorded programs as well.

Also ServSafe Food Safety trainings will be offered in Coshocton in July for Manager Certification and in August for Person-in-Charge Certification. Registration details will be announced soon.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!