



Binge Eating Disorder

Binge eating disorder (BED) is recognized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), as a distinct eating disorder.¹ BED is characterized by eating, in a discrete period of time, a larger amount of food than most people would eat in a similar period. During binge-eating episodes, people feel they can't control what or how much they eat. People with BED eat quickly, often until they are uncomfortable, eat large amounts of food even when not hungry, eat alone so others don't witness their behavior, and feel disgusted, guilty, or depressed after a binge-eating episode. In order to satisfy the DSM-5 criteria, these episodes must occur, on average, at least once a week for three months. BED is not associated with purging or other compensatory behaviors such as laxative use or excessive exercise.

There are links among obesity, mood disorders, and BED. In a national survey, 45% of people with BED had obesity,² and BED is associated with depression and anxiety. In a study of people enrolled in a lifestyle intervention program for weight loss, only 27% of people with both major depressive disorder and BED achieved clinically significant weight loss, compared with 67% of people without either disorder.³

A greater understanding of the mechanisms underlying these links may advance more effective prevention and treatment for both BED and obesity.⁴

1. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 5th ed. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association; 2013; 350-353.
2. Hudson JI, et al. *Biol Psychiatry*. 2007; 61:348-358.
3. Pagato S, et al. *Obesity*. 2007; 15:2557-2559.
4. Peterson RE, et al. *J Obes*. 2012:407103.