



DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

# Managing Anorexia Nervosa

It can be difficult to know where to begin if you are struggling with anorexia nervosa. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

## Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

<b>Amenorrhea</b>	Abnormal absence of menstruation. As anorexia progresses, it is common for women to experience a loss of their period over time, signaling medical concerns.
<b>Anorexia nervosa</b>	An eating disorder often characterized by weight loss and/or difficulty maintaining an appropriate weight based on things like age and height.
<b>Atypical anorexia</b>	This term might be used when some of the required features of anorexia nervosa are missing in order to meet the full diagnosis of anorexia nervosa.
<b>Compulsive exercise</b>	Intense feeling of the need to physically exercise. Usually characterized by excessive, rigid physical exercise routines.
<b>Electrolyte imbalance</b>	When insufficient electrolytes can be maintained in the blood or bodily fluids. This can happen as a result of malnutrition.
<b>Ketosis</b>	When there is low intake of carbohydrates and body uses stored fat for energy. Over time this can change the acidity of the blood and can lead to damage of the liver and kidneys.
<b>Purging behavior</b>	Physically eliminating waste from the body in an attempt to control weight. Can include behaviors such as self-induced vomiting, misuse of laxatives, diuretics or enemas.
<b>Restriction</b>	Limiting the intake of food. This can include limiting certain food groups completely or intentionally taking in very small amounts of food.
<b>Underweight</b>	Being below a weight that is considered to be normal or desirable, based on factors like gender, age, and height.



## Questions to Ask

These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage anorexia nervosa

### About Symptoms

- What is the difference between dieting and anorexia nervosa?
- Could I have anorexia nervosa even if I don't necessarily look underweight?
- What kinds of symptoms do doctors look for to know if someone has anorexia?

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### About Causes & Risk Factors

- What types of factors contribute to developing anorexia?
- Are there certain people more at risk for anorexia than others?
- What are some of the medical complications that people might experience if they have anorexia?
- Is anorexia something that is passed on through genetics?

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### About Diagnosis

- How can I know for sure that I have anorexia nervosa?
- Are there certain tests or evaluations that I would need to complete to be diagnosed?
- What happens after someone is diagnosed?

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### About Treatment

- What are some of the best treatment approaches for anorexia nervosa?
- What is the likelihood of someone fully recovering from anorexia?
- Are there certain medication that I might be asked to take as part of my treatment?
- How will I know what treatments will work best for me?
- If I am diagnosed with anorexia, will I have to go away for treatment or are there local treatment options available?

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