Though half of Americans know someone living with an eating disorder, these serious biological illnesses continue to be drastically underdiagnosed and under-treated.

Given our cultural emphasis on food and appearance, it can be hard to know what is normal when it comes to eating and body image. If you are concerned that a friend or loved one is showing signs of disordered eating, it may be time to check in. By preparing for an informed conversation, sensitively expressing your concerns and offering your support, you can play an important role in the healing and recovery process.

**Eating disorders don’t discriminate by age, gender, race, or socioeconomic status and cannot be diagnosed just by looking at a person.**

**Listen** to how your friend or loved one talks about their weight, eating and body image.

**Be mindful** of negative social media behavior, such as likes or shares of posts that promote unrealistic weight-loss or diet goals.

**Engage** in routine, casual conversations to explore more about how your loved one is feeling and reacting to stress on a daily basis.

**Plan a time** to talk if you have noticed your friend’s behavior around food, appearance or weight getting in the way of what they enjoy.

**Gently express** your concerns about changes in mood or behavior and offer help to seek treatment. Avoid focusing on their weight.

**Let them know** you’re always there to listen. Ask for specific things you can do to help.

The Center for Eating Disorders offers an Online Assessment tool to help identify warning signs across the spectrum of eating disorders and help you decide what to do next. Visit [eatingdisorder.org/assess](http://eatingdisorder.org/assess)

**CONTACT US:** (410) 943-2121 and EatingDisorderInfo@sheppardpratt.org

**WEBSITE:** [www.eatingdisorder.org](http://www.eatingdisorder.org)

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