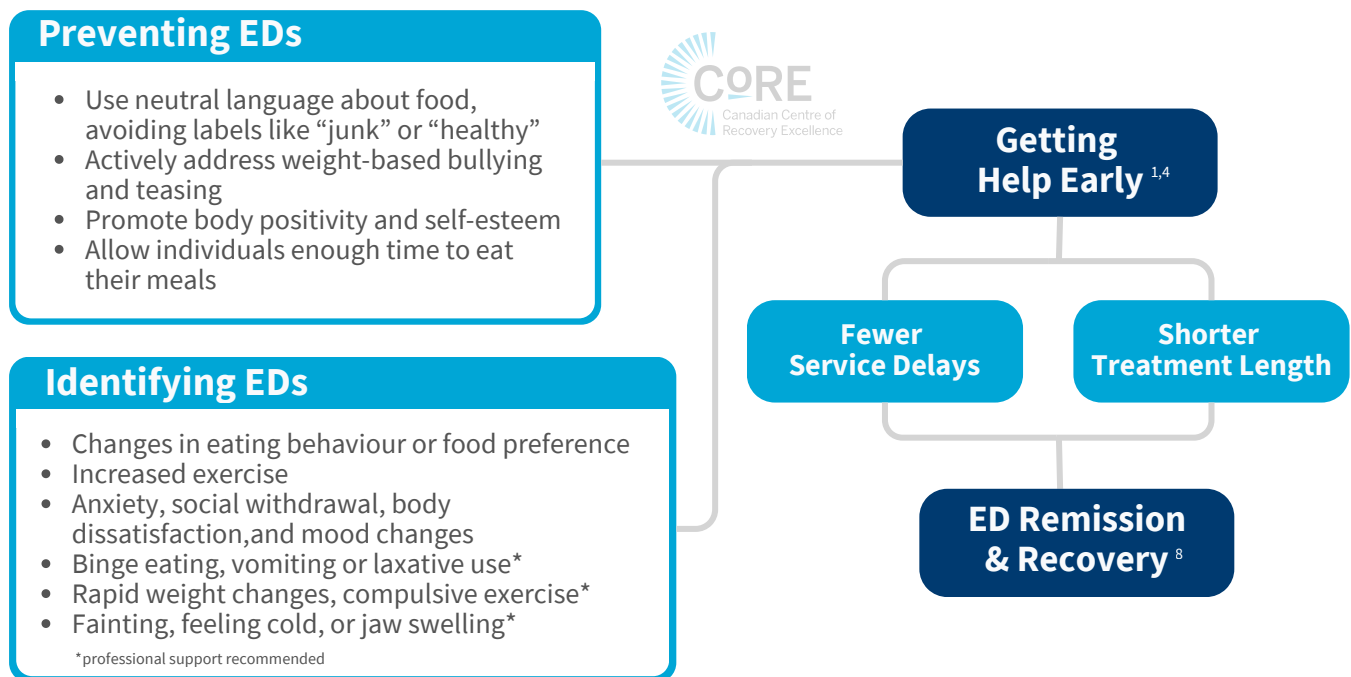


EATING DISORDERS

Have the **2nd highest death rate** among all mental health conditions^{1,2}

Eating disorders (EDs) are serious mental illnesses.^{1,2} They involve problems with eating that affect how much or how well someone takes in food, which can seriously harm a person's physical, emotional, and social health.³ EDs have the second-highest death rate among all mental health conditions, with only opioid use disorder being higher.^{1,2} About 8% of people have an ED, and nearly 30% of Canadian youth engage in disordered eating.⁴ These disorders can also lead to other mental health problems, higher healthcare costs, and stress on caregivers.⁵ Many people believe EDs only affect adolescent girls, but in reality, they can affect anyone, including boys, men, and women in middle age.^{6,7} If you are in Alberta and are struggling with an ED, you can get meaningful help today.^{a,b}

A review of seven countries found that people with EDs often go more than two years without treatment, mainly because they do not seek treatment themselves.⁸ However, preventing and treating EDs early can make a huge difference for those affected and their families.^{1,4} This Mental Health and Addiction Brief highlights that family members and supporters can help reduce the severity of EDs by creating a positive environment, identifying EDs early, and encouraging access to support.⁸ Other helpful factors to ED remission and recovery include fewer service delays, entering treatment at a younger age, and shorter treatment lengths.^{1,4,8} Early identification and treatment of EDs can lead to sustained recovery. Start your recovery journey today.



1. Eating Disorder Awareness for School Providers [Zoom]. Eating Disorder Center of Excellence; 2025 July 24 [cited 2025 Aug 1].
2. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40337-025-01343-6>
3. <https://www.psychiatryonline.org/doi/book/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787>
4. <https://eatingdisordersontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/EDO-P-2023-24-report-Final.pdf>
5. <https://doi.org/10.1002/eat.24519>
6. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-080921-074125>
7. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-019-1057-5>
8. <https://doi.org/10.1002/erv.2745>

a. Mental Health Helpline at 1-877-303-2642 or the National Eating Disorder Information Center (NEDIC) at 1-866-633-4220
b. Eating Disorder Support Network for Alberta (EDSNA) supports referrals to two ED programs and offers non-clinical support groups in-person and online, visit: <https://edsna.ca/find-support/>