

Eating Disorder Quick Statistics

Eating Disorders are Common and Potentially Life Threatening:

- It is estimated that more than 1.7 million Canadians suffer from an eating disorder at any given time (Galmiche et al., 2019).
- No updated studies have been done since, but this statistic is now 2.7 million
- Eating disorders have the second highest mortality rate of all mental health disorders after addiction
- A large majority of these individuals are female adolescents and emerging adults, with most first-time cases occurring before the age of 25 (Volpe et al., 2016; Ward et al., 2019).
- If not treated early, eating disorders persist into/throughout adulthood (e.g., in approximately 33% of anorexia and bulimia nervosa patients in a 22-year follow-up study; (Eddy et al., 2017)), and often have long-term physical and psychological consequences (Keski-Rahkonen & Mustelin, 2016; O'Brien et al., 2017; Vall & Wade, 2015).
- Anorexia nervosa (AN), for example, is one of the deadliest psychiatric conditions (Arcelus et al., 2011), with a standardized mortality ratio of 5.86 (across all age groups) compared to a reference group.
- Among deaths among individuals with AN, an estimated 1 in 5 were the result of suicide (Arcelus et al., 2011).
- There is a relationship between the standardized mortality ratio and age of diagnosis, with a ratio of 10 for persons diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 19 and a ratio of 18, if diagnosed between the ages of 20–29 (Arcelus et al., 2011).
- Standardized mortality ratios for other common eating disorders follow closely, such as bulimia nervosa at 1.93 and eating disorder – not otherwise specified at 1.92 (Arcelus et al., 2011).
- In Canada, it is estimated that approximately 1000 – 1500 individuals die from AN or bulimia nervosa each year (Woodside, 2013). This is not considering other eating disorders, or deaths due to secondary complications of an eating disorder.