

Presentations of CYP eating disorders

What to look out for - signs and symptoms

(From Healthy London Partnership draft guidance)

When assessing for an eating disorder or deciding whether to refer CYP for assessment, take into account any of the following that apply:

- an unusually low or high BMI or body weight for their age;
- rapid weight loss;
- dieting or restrictive eating practices (such as dieting when they are underweight) that are worrying them, their family members or carers, or professionals;
- family members or carers report a change in eating and social behaviours e.g. withdrawal, particularly from situations that involve food;
- other mental health problems;
- a disproportionate concern about their weight or shape;
- problems managing a long term illness that affects diet, such as diabetes or coeliac disease;
- 'diabulimia' with CYP who manipulate their insulin in order to control their weight;
- menstrual or other endocrine disturbances, or unexplained gastrointestinal symptoms;
- physical signs of malnutrition, including poor circulation, dizziness, palpitations and fainting;
- compensatory behaviours, including laxative or diet pills, vomiting or excessive exercise;
- abdominal pain that is associated with vomiting or restrictions in diet, and that cannot be fully explained by a medical condition;
- unexplained electrolyte imbalance or hypoglycaemia;
- atypical dental wear (such as erosion);
- whether CYP take part in activities associated with a high risk of eating disorders (for example, professional sport, fashion, dance, or modelling).