

ADHD and Eating Disorders

How medication may affect appetite and energy:

Stimulant medications work by increasing levels of certain brain chemicals (like dopamine and norepinephrine) to help improve focus, attention, and self-regulation.



But those same changes in brain chemistry can also affect hunger signals, digestion, and how the stomach functions. That's why eating may become difficult while taking them - especially earlier in the day.

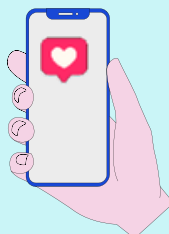
Close monitoring and individualised care are vital to ensure safe prescribing of ADHD medications to individuals with an eating disorder.

Individuals with ADHD face a heightened risk for eating disorders due to several biological, cognitive, behavioural and emotional factors. **Psychoeducation** is helpful for individuals to grow an understanding of the link between the two and can lead to a better treatment outcome. Some key elements of psychoeducation for ADHD and Eating Disorders are:

- **Understanding impulsivity:** impulsivity in individuals with ADHD can lead to impulsive eating or restrictive diets.
- **Emotional dysregulation:** This can cause individuals with ADHD to restrict food intake or engage in unhealthy eating behaviours.
- **Executive Functioning:** ADHD affects executive functioning which is the brain's ability to plan, organise and make decisions. This can include planning meals and stopping when full.
- **Sensory issues:** A sensitivity to texture, smell or noise can make eating challenging for individuals with ADHD.

Support for individuals with ADHD and eating disorders can include structured meal planning, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), medication monitoring and mindful eating practices.

Recovery Record is a smart companion app for managing your recovery from eating disorders.



BEAT eating disorders support helpline is available by phone, email and webchat, 0808 801 0677