

Dietician's Corner

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EATING DISORDER AWARENESS

By Amanda Thul, RD, LD

Eating disorder awareness week was the last week of February. I partnered with one of our mental health counselors, Nolan Vitzthum, and we shared information on eating disorders to raise awareness and resources. If you missed this, check out the HCMH facebook page!

Eating disorders are serious mental and physical illnesses that can affect people of all genders, ages, races, religions, ethnicities, sexual orientations, body shapes, and weights. In the United States, 28.8 million Americans will suffer from an eating disorder at some point in their lives. Someone dies every 52 minutes as a direct result of an eating disorder. Fear of weight gain, feeling like one is overeating, feelings of guilt, thinking about dieting, and a desire for thinness are predictive of eating disorder severity.

Our society right now is so fixated on health and wellness to a point that it can be harmful. There is so much fear and negativity involving food. We hear these very polarized messages that food is either good or bad and if we eat a bad food then we're doomed. The impact of our diets on our health has been taken to an unnecessary extreme. It can cause so much stress, shame and guilt especially if you eat the foods you're not "supposed" to or unable to afford or don't have time to prepare the "good" foods you're supposed to be eating. One study found that females who dieted moderately were 5 times more likely to develop an eating disorder and those who practiced extreme restriction with their eating were 18 times more likely to develop an eating disorder than those who did not diet.

How we talk about food and our eating habits, whether our own self talk or to others, makes an impact on our own physical and mental health even if we don't realize it. Not to mention impacting the health and wellbeing of the ones around us listening to the negative food talk (especially kiddos!) It's time to change the conversation around food!

Have More Questions?

I'd love to help you weed through the nutrition pseudoscience and get to the answer.

Reach me at the hospital at
515-332-7608.

