

# Here's What You Should Know About Binge Eating Disorder

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## Transcript

### [Introduction 0:00]

*Dr. Jennifer Couturier:* I'm Dr. Jennifer Couturier, an associate professor within the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University and medical co-director of the Eating Disorders program at McMaster Children's Hospital. Binge eating disorder is the most common specific type of eating disorder, affecting up to 5% of the population. It is even more common than anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa.

### [Symptoms of binge eating disorder 00:29]

*Dr. Jennifer Couturier:* The symptoms of binge eating disorder include repeatedly eating a large amount of food in an out-of-control fashion, which is not context-appropriate, and without any compensatory behaviour such as fasting or purging. We're not talking about a buffet or a Christmas dinner here. Those would be situations where it is typical to eat a lot. Binge eating episodes occur regularly, at least once a week for a period of three months.

### [Emotional impact 00:56]

*Dr. Jennifer Couturier:* The eating episodes are often followed by feelings of distress, shame, disgust, guilt, and depression. Binge eating disorder affects men and women more equally than other eating disorders and has its onset in the late teens or early 20s. A common misconception about binge eating disorder is that it only affects people who live in larger bodies. In fact, we know that binge eating disorder can affect anyone. It is seen in all cultures and countries around the world.

### [Research and treatment 01:25]

*Dr. Jennifer Couturier:* In terms of research on binge eating disorder, a recent area of study is focused on whether GLP-1 agonists, such as Ozempic, could be effective for this disorder, but much further study on risks and benefits is needed. There could be significant risks in using these medications in relation to this disorder, including worsening disordered eating as well as physical complications. Some of the best treatment for binge eating disorder is psychotherapy, specifically cognitive behavioural therapy or dialectical behaviour therapy. Both of these treatments focus on using skills to normalize eating patterns.

For help with binge eating disorder, please speak to your doctor or another health care professional, or check trustworthy online resources such as Canadian websites Body Brave or the National Eating Disorder Information Center.

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