

How To Encourage a Loved One to Seek Help

The recommended strategy to deal with an eating disorder is to seek professional help. This may seem straightforward but it can be stressful and challenging.

Here are some tips to support your loved one with taking this step:

- **Find a Professional and Appointments**
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- **Start with a Medical Checkup.**
 - Eating disorders can cause serious health issues. It's important that your loved one see a doctor regularly to make sure their health isn't in immediate risk. Note that lab results may come back normal, even if the individual is struggling physically, so don't rely on blood tests alone.
- **Help Them Find the Right Professional.**
 - If the first therapist doesn't seem like a good fit, encourage them to continue the search. It is important to connect them with a provider that has experience with eating disorders. It can sometimes take several tries before finding the right person - it's important to interview potential options.
- **Join with the part of them that wants to get well.**
 - Many can be hesitant to change their behaviors. It can be helpful to lean on the social, emotional, and/or physical impact(s) their eating disorder is having as this may help them to acknowledge and address the issue
- **Remind the person of why they want to get well.**
 - Reconnecting your loved one to their values and what they want to do in life can help them focus on the long term benefits of recovery.

NEDA has resources for individuals and families looking to learn more about eating disorders and where to find treatment.



NationalEatingDisorders.org

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