

EATING DISORDERS

There is much concern among doctors about patients who are overweight. Many of us are taking hardly any exercise and are consuming far too many **calories** for our **sedentary** way of life. So it is that more and more of us are suffering from **obesity** and this can have dangerous consequences for our health.

On the other hand, doctors are also worried at the increase in the number of people who are suffering from **anorexia**. This is an **eating disorder** in which people think that they are disgustingly overweight when, in fact, they are far too thin. Often, they pretend to eat at meal times, but hide the food, disposing of it later. The disease is sometimes known as the **slimmer's disease**, but it is far more serious than such a name implies. Anorexia can result in **malnutrition** and later the complete **collapse** of the body, eventually leading to death.

Excessively thin or skinny fashion models and other **celebrities** are often blamed for the spread of this disorder since the young and impressionable regard them as **role models** and try to copy them. Yet, some experts claim that anorexia is an emotional disorder. Until recently the disorder seemed to affect mainly young women, but now young men are acknowledged sufferers also. Furthermore, the age of the sufferers is getting younger and younger. Some are as young as six years old.

At the same time; a growing number of people are suffering from **bulimia**. In the course of this disorder, the sufferer often has times when they **overindulge** and **binge** on various foods and then **vomit** to get rid of it. Sometimes they take **laxatives** for the same reason. This condition is also a serious one as it can have a bad effect on the bulimic's general health, as well as causing rotting of the teeth. Again, it has been suggested that this disease can be emotional in origin.

It is all right to go on a diet for a short time if you want to lose weight, but you should avoid crash diets. It is far better to eat a **balanced diet** all the time and take some exercise.