



Suicide Attempts and Eating Disorders

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U.S. adults with a lifetime history of an [eating disorder](#) [1]—anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, or binge eating disorder—are at increased risk of having a suicide attempt history.

Using data from a nationally representative sample of more than 36,000 respondents, researchers looked at the lifetime prevalence of suicide attempts in adults with an eating disorder history. They found that the prevalence of suicide attempts was 24.9% among those with a history of anorexia. Levels of suicide risk were different for each of the two anorexia subtypes. The prevalence of suicide attempts associated with the binge/purge subtype was much higher than the restricting subtype (44.1% and 15.7% respectively).

The researchers also found that 31.4% of those with a history of bulimia and 22.9% of those with a history of binge eating disorder had attempted suicide in their lifetime. After adjusting for sociodemographic variables, individuals with any type of eating disorder history were more likely to have a greater number of suicide attempts compared to those without an eating disorder history.

Routine screening for suicide and eating disorders by health care providers could better inform treatment planning and referrals.

Udo, T., Bitley, S., & Grilo, C. M. (2019). Suicide attempts in U.S. adults with lifetime DSM-5 eating disorders. *BMC Medicine*, 17(120). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-019-1352-3> [2]

Links within this resource

[1] <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/eating-disorders/index.shtml>

[2] <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-019-1352-3>

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