



Patient & Family Guide

2024

Leaving Eating Disorder Treatment



www.nshealth.ca

Leaving Eating Disorder Treatment

- While you were in eating disorder treatment, you learned how to have a healthy relationship with food, exercise, and your body. After you leave treatment, you can keep working on these skills.
- When you leave treatment, you may feel:
 - › Happy
 - › Sad
 - › Excited
 - › Scared
 - › Nervous
 - › A combination of these emotions (feelings)
- You may wonder if you are ready to leave treatment or if you can keep recovering on your own. It may take time to feel confident in your recovery. This is common.

Aftercare planning

It may help to make a plan for after your treatment (called an aftercare plan) and share it with a loved one or a support person. An aftercare plan may include:

- Going home
- Going back to:
 - › Work or school
 - › Parenting
 - › Your relationships
- Building a support network
 - › Who can help you to keep recovering?
- Preventing relapse (setbacks)
 - › Learning your triggers
 - › How you will know if you are struggling
 - › Who you can ask for support
 - › Ways to manage stress
 - › Reminders and motivation for recovery
- Ways to keep challenging the eating disorder
 - › Are there areas you would like to keep working on?
- Managing other physical or mental illnesses
- Making a schedule for self-check-ins

Things that may help:

- Make an appointment to see your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) to monitor your health as you recover. Talking to a supportive loved one may also help.
- It may help to follow the same eating routine as you did in treatment (3 meals and 3 snacks a day). Telling your loved ones and support persons about your routine can help you to keep it up.
- Going back to work, school, volunteering, and social activities can be rewarding. It may also be hard for you to adjust to these activities after leaving treatment. Setting boundaries can help you keep balance in your life and your recovery.

Relapse warning signs

- As you recover, you will have good days and bad days. Sometimes you may feel great, and other times recovery might take more effort.
- If you think you might be relapsing, ask for help. You are always welcome to come back for treatment, if needed.
- Some warning signs that may mean you are struggling include:
 - › Changes in your eating habits, like skipping meals, eating very small portions, or changing how much or what type of food you eat
 - › Thinking a lot about your weight, calories, or your body shape
 - › Working out a lot or using exercise as a way to make up for eating, not being able to have rest days
 - › Exercise is getting in the way of doing other things that are important in your life
 - › Avoiding social activities, especially those involving food, or not feeling comfortable around other people while you are eating
 - › Changes in your weight, like weight loss or gain
 - › Feeling very tired or having other health issues related to your eating habits

- › Mood swings, feeling irritable, or having feelings of guilt or shame related to eating
- › Hiding food, eating in secret, or being unusually private about your eating habits
- › Not feeling satisfied with your body and it is affecting the way you eat and think
- › Not eating a variety of different foods or feeling worried about trying new foods

To start treatment again:

- Talk with your primary health care provider or community clinician.
- They can make a referral through mental health intake services.

Recovery resources

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia

- Peer mentor support, workshops, teaching, and virtual chat rooms to help you keep up your recovery
 - › <https://eatingdisordersns.ca/>
 - › Phone: 902-229-8436
 - › Email: info@eatingdisordersns.ca

National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC)

- Resources, referrals, and support for Canadians affected by eating disorders
 - › <https://nedic.ca/>
 - › Phone (toll-free): 1-866-633-4220
 - › Email: nedic@uhn.ca

Beat Eating Disorders

- Resources, and supports for people recovering from eating disorders
 - › www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/

The Youth Project

- › <https://youthproject.ns.ca/support/>

National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA)

- Support and resources for people and families affected by eating disorders
 - › www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/

Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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