

MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS **RESEARCH SUMMARY**

TOPIC: BINGE EATING: IS YOUR BODY CLOCK THE CAUSE?
REPORT: MB #4991

BACKGROUND: Binge eating is defined as the consumption of an objectively large amount of food combined with a sense of loss of control over the eating. Binge eating disorder (BED) is determined by recurrent episodes of binge eating, in addition to distress about the eating, secrecy of eating, or eating in the absence of hunger. Binge eating disorder is commonly associated with obesity. The association between binge eating and obesity leads to direct physical health consequences, and there are also associated psychological consequences such as greater rates of depression.

(Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6709690/>)

DIAGNOSING: The exact cause of binge eating disorder isn't known, but it's likely due to a combination of things, including genetics, family eating habits, emotions, and eating behavior, like skipping meals. Some people use food as a way to soothe themselves or to cope with difficult feelings. People with binge eating disorder are more likely to have other mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and ADHD. Someone who's binge eating might eat a lot of food quickly, hide food containers or wrappers in their room, have big changes in their weight (up or down), skip meals, eat at unusual times, and eat alone. People who binge might have feelings that are common in many eating disorders, such as depression, anxiety, guilt, or shame. They may avoid school, work, or socializing with friends because they're ashamed of their binge eating problem or changes in their body shape and weight. When kids or teen binge eat, parents may first suspect a problem when large amounts of food go missing from the pantry or refrigerator.

(Source: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/binge-eating.html>)

NEW STUDY: A study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health led by Cynthia Bulik, Ph.D., of the University of North Carolina, is looking to predict binge and purge episodes and intervene in real-time before they occur and would support the development and scalability of treatments for binge-eating disorder and bulimia nervosa. The data will be collected over 30 days from more than 1,000 individuals with binge-eating disorder or bulimia nervosa. The analysis team, led by Jonathan Butner, Ph.D., of the University of Utah, will then model the data to see if they can identify stable, low-risk, and high-risk patterns that signal impending binge or purge episodes.

(Source: <https://csbs.utah.edu/news/technology-eating-disorders.php>)

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If this story or any other Ivanhoe story has impacted your life or prompted you or someone you know to seek or change treatments, please let us know by contacting Marjorie Bekaert Thomas at mthomas@ivanhoe.com