



## Nine Truths about Eating Disorders

**Truth #1:** You can't tell by looking at someone whether they have an eating disorder.

**Truth #2:** Families are not to blame.

**Truth #3:** Families can be the patients' best allies in treatment.

**Truth #4:** Eating disorders are not choices, but serious biologically-influenced mental illnesses

**Truth #5:** Eating disorders affect people of all genders, ages, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses.

**Truth #6:** Eating disorders carry an increased risk for both suicide and physical/medical complications.

**Truth #7:** Genes play a role in eating disorders, but environment also influences their development

**Truth #8:** Genes are not destiny when it comes to eating disorders.

**Truth #9:** Full recovery from an eating disorder is possible.

Produced in collaboration with Dr. Cynthia Bulik, PhD, FAED, who serves as distinguished Professor of Eating Disorders in the School of Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Nine Truths" is based on Dr. Bulik's 2014 "[9 Eating Disorders Myths Busted](#)" talk at the National Institute of Mental Health.

Leading associations in the field of eating disorders also contributed their valuable input.

(The Academy for Eating Disorders, Families Empowered and Supporting Treatment of Eating Disorders, National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, National Eating Disorders Association, Residential Eating Disorders Consortium, Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action, Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association, Binge Eating Disorder Association, Eating Disorder Parent Support Group, International Eating Disorder Action, Project HEAL, and Trans Folx Fighting Eating Disorders) will be disseminating this document.