

DSM 5 Criteria for Anorexia Nervosa

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM 5) is the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the United States.

The following are the diagnostic criteria for anorexia nervosa according to DSM 5:

- Restriction of energy intake relative to requirements, leading to a significantly low body weight in the context of age, sex, developmental trajectory, and physical health. Significantly low weight is defined as a weight that is less than minimally normal or, for children and adolescents, less than that minimally expected.
- Intense fear of gaining weight or of becoming fat, or persistent behavior that interferes with weight gain, even though at a significantly low weight.
- Disturbance in the way one experiences one's body weight or shape, undue influence of body weight or shape on self-evaluation, or persistent lack of recognition of the seriousness of the current low body weight.

Subtypes

Here are the two subtypes of anorexia nervosa as defined by DSM-5:

- **Restricting type:** During the last 3 months, the individual has not engaged in recurrent episodes of binge eating or purging behavior (i.e., self-induced vomiting or the misuse of laxatives, diuretics, or enemas). This subtype describes presentations in which weight loss is accomplished primarily through dieting, fasting, and/or excessive exercise.
- **Binge-eating/purging type:** During the last 3 months, the individual has engaged in recurrent episodes of binge eating or purging behavior (i.e., self-induced vomiting or the misuse of laxatives, diuretics, or enemas).

Level of severity

The level of severity of anorexia nervosa is determined by the current body mass index (BMI) as follows:

- **Mild:** BMI \geq 17 kg/m²
- **Moderate:** BMI 16–16.99 kg/m²
- **Severe:** BMI 15–15.99 kg/m²
- **Extreme:** BMI < 15 kg/m²

References

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5(5). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2016). *Table 19, DSM-IV to DSM-5 Anorexia Nervosa Comparison*. [Nih.gov](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov); Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK519712/table/ch3.t15/>