

# EATING DISORDERS

## TO YOUR HEALTH - PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT



### ARE YOUR EATING HABITS HURTING YOUR SMILE?

Eating disorders like Bulimia and Anorexia are not only harmful to your overall health but can be particularly destructive to teeth. The lack of proper minerals, vitamins, proteins and other nutrients takes a toll on the entire body.

When vomiting is used to purge food from the body, stomach acids attack tooth enamel. Over time the following dental problems may develop:

- Widespread cavities and chipped teeth
- Swollen tonsils and redness of the throat
- Hot and cold sensitivity
- Dry mouth and bad breath
- Red, dry and cracked lips
- Bleeding gums
- Hoarseness of the voice
- Burning of the tongue

### WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

If you suspect you have an eating disorder, see a health care professional as soon as possible. To minimize the damage of stomach acid on the teeth the following is recommended:

- Do not brush immediately after vomiting
- Rinse mouth immediately after vomiting with water and a teaspoon of baking soda or to neutralize acids
- Brush daily with a fluoride toothpaste
- Apply stannous fluoride gel or fluoride mouth rinse
- Floss with dental floss
- Consider saliva substitute if very dry mouth
- Have regular dental check-ups and restore teeth

### ON CAMPUS RESOURCE

- Contact the Counseling and Psychological Services at 453-5371 or the Registered Dietitian at 453-3311.