

# helping

helping a friend with an eating disorder



- Choose a time and place to talk away from distractions and interruptions.
- Don't be judgmental. Describe specific observations that have given you concern, rather than judging actions: exercising too much, eating too little.
- Be a good listener, but don't promise to keep serious information confidential. Caring for your friend does not mean you should be manipulated because you are "the only one who understands".
- Don't assume the role of therapist or nutritionist. Eating disorders are serious problems and usually require professional help. Encourage your friend to seek help. Do the legwork for her if necessary and offer to accompany her to the appointment.
- Don't oversimplify the problem by saying, "all you have to do is eat." This is a complex problem, and dwelling on weight, eating and appearance won't solve it.
- Don't engage in a battle, but don't ignore the problem. If your friend denies having a problem...and she may do that, don't be deceived by excuses. Instead, state the facts: You are concerned, you have observed a situation that appears unhealthy, and you think this needs to be checked out by a professional.

## For more information:

[www.something-fishy.com](http://www.something-fishy.com)

[www.edreferral.org](http://www.edreferral.org)

[www.edap.org](http://www.edap.org)

[www.bulimia.com](http://www.bulimia.com)

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)