

Origins of Dysfunctional Eating Behavior (DEB) Model

Biology-Based DEB

Caused by genes, genes interacting with environment & personality, illness that causes brain damage, illness that causes or requires alterations in metabolism, diet or weight

Look like/Co-occur with: OCD, Anxiety, ADD, ASD, Depression, PANDAS, PCOS, Hypothyroid, Sleep Disorders, Diabetes, Celiac Disease, Food Allergies, Prader-Willi, Infectious Disease, Auto-Immune Disease, Concussion, IBS/Gastritis, Cancer, Lupus, Lyme Disease, Mono, etc.

Treatment is Pharmacology specific to co-occurring condition, Brain-based interventions not invented yet, Nutritional Restoration (Intake-based not weight-based, CBT, ERP)

Addiction-Based DEB

Caused by Alterations in brain chemistry due to substance use, genetic pre-disposition to addiction, attempts to control weight-related effects of addiction or sobriety

Look like/Co-occur with: Substance Abuse or Heavy Use, Self-Harm, Process Addictions, Addicted Family Members

Treatment is specific to addiction – Pharmacology, 12-Step such as AA, ABA, ACOA, Al-Anon, NA, etc., Peer support/sponsorship, Support groups, Nutrition Education & Counseling, Abstinence Model based primarily on abstaining from DEB not food

Trauma/Stress-Based DEB

Caused by Alterations in brain function resulting from traumatic life events, chronic stress, perfectionism/internal or external pressure to achieve

Look like/Co-occur with: PTSD, Trauma History, Chronically Stressful Childhood, Dysfunctional Caregiving Environment, Neglect, Abandonment, Disruption of Living Situation, Death or Illness of a Loved One, Bullying, Insecure Attachment, Food Insecurity, Imprisonment, Disabling, Career-ending or Athletic Career-ending Injury, Life-threatening illness or diagnosis of chronic disease

Treatment is Pharmacology for concurrent conditions, Nutritional Counseling, EMDR, SE, DBT, Talk Therapy, Support Groups, Grief/Loss/Crisis Counseling, etc. as appropriate

Social/ Learned DEB

Caused by peer pressure, body dissatisfaction, family or cultural food practices such as punishment by withholding food, societal standards of attractiveness, dieting, food trends such as “cleanses” and others, external locus of weight control such as athletic weight requirements

Look like/Co-occur with: Chronic Dieting, Binge-Eating, Binge-Drinking, Weight Fluctuations, Low Self-Esteem, Promiscuity

Treatment is Nutrition Education & Counseling, Mindfulness, Intuitive Eating, Media Literacy, Self-esteem work