

### ■ Physical effects of binge eating

- ◆ Abdominal distension. This follows binge eating and is often accompanied by breathlessness due to the diaphragm being pushed up by the bloated stomach.
- ◆ Menstrual disturbances – risk of infertility.
- ◆ General digestive problems such as stomach cramps, wind, constipation and diarrhoea.
- ◆ Rupture of the stomach. This is rare but can happen in people who avoid eating for a period of some days and then have a gross binge.

### ■ Physical effects of self-induced vomiting

- ◆ Swelling of the glands around the face. The salivary glands and parotid glands around the jaw become enlarged. The swelling gives the face a rounded appearance which the bulimic often misinterprets as evidence of general fatness.
- ◆ Damage to throat, hoarseness of the voice and recurrent throat infections.
- ◆ Erosion of tooth enamel.
- ◆ Bursting of blood vessels around the eye.
- ◆ Damage to sphincter muscles at the entrance of the stomach.

### ■ Physical effects of misusing laxatives and diuretics

- ◆ Damage to the muscles lining the bowels.
- ◆ Chronic diarrhoea and malabsorption.
- ◆ Fluid and body salt abnormalities.
- ◆ Laxatives have little impact on calorie absorption and diuretics have none at all.

### ■ Physical effects of either self-induced vomiting and/or purgative abuse

- ◆ Loss of body potassium which can lead to fatal heart irregularities, episodes of palpitations and kidney failure.
- ◆ Dehydration, resulting in dry mouth, extreme thirst, constipation and dry skin.
- ◆ Other metabolic disturbances may produce profound weakness, pins and needles in the hands and legs, muscle twitches and cramps.

### ■ Effect of dieting

- ◆ Repeatedly going on and off diets usually causes weight gain over time, because the bodies metabolism alters. When the person stops dieting and starts eating normally, metabolic efficiency persists and they gain weight rapidly.

### ■ Effect on psychological state

- ◆ Secret and lonely existence
- ◆ Shame, guilt and depression.
- ◆ Impaired personal relationships and social life.
- ◆ Poor concentration.