

Case Studies for Healthy Eating

Case Study 1

As a young child, Fatima did not worry about her weight. When she was 11 years old, some of her friends started to talk about dieting, but Fatima was comfortable with her body. When Fatima turned 12 years old, her body began to change. One of her friends remarked that Fatima was gaining weight. She became concerned about getting fat so she decided to go on a diet and not allow her weight to go above 43 kg (95 lb.). Eventually, Fatima started to have difficulties sleeping at night. She felt tired and cold all of the time. She noticed her hair was thinning and one day she even fainted in class. As a result of these physical changes, Fatima began to avoid going out with her friends. At age 13, her favourite grandmother passed away. As this time she began to starve herself and lost a dramatic amount of weight striving to be as thin as possible and hating herself even if she gained an ounce.

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Discussion Questions

1. Why did Fatima begin dieting?

2. What were the effects of Fatima's dieting and undereating?

3. Why do you think that Fatima began starving herself at age 13?

4. What social things was Fatima missing out on by dieting?

Case Study 2

John is 12 years old and likes to play sports. He is sometimes teased by the other kids in phys. ed. class because he isn't as muscular or as athletic as they are. Over time, John begins to dislike any kind of physical activity and prefers to stay home playing on his computer and watching television. John feels lonely and bored so he begins eating more than he normally ate to occupy himself. John thinks that eating more will be OK, because it might help him gain more muscle. His family notices he is beginning to put on weight, and he isn't participating in any sports or playing with his friends. Not only does John begin to feel tired all the time and complain of constant indigestion, he feels sad and down on himself and his body.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does John begin eating more?

2. What are the effects of John's overeating?

3. Why do John's classmates ridicule him?

4. What impact do you think that John's classmates' teasing had on him?

5. What would you recommend John do to become comfortable about his athletic abilities?