



Oxford Health
NHS Foundation Trust



Wiltshire Community Eating Disorder Service

Keeping Yourself Well at University

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Introduction

Congratulations on securing your place at university! Going to university is great and can be very beneficial for your recovery journey, building yourself a life away from your eating disorder.

However, it can also be incredibly overwhelming.

Before you go, we recommend looking through this leaflet that provides you with tips for starting university, having had or when currently recovering from an eating disorder, in order to keep yourself well on your journey.

Practical things before you start

You don't have to wait to get to university to start building a support network to help you when you arrive. We would recommend looking into the following options before you move to help you feel more prepared and supported:

- ✓ Arrange to meet with your University's student support centre
- ✓ Register with a local GP and arrange an appointment
- ✓ Discuss with your therapist whether a referral to the local Eating Disorders Team is required
- ✓ Check out local support groups

- ✔ Take a look at this page on help if you're a student with a learning difficulty, health problem or disability:
<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>

Your current support network

Whilst putting things in place to support you at university is useful, don't forget to take your current support network with you!

You may want to ask some of these people to help you extend your support network to the services at university as we have discussed in the 'practical things before you start' section.

- ✔ Continue to use your existing network until you have established a new one to ensure you have continuing support
- ✔ Work out times to talk with your family and friends to let them know how things are
- ✔ Be selective about your friendships: Avoid people who drain your energy, encourage disordered eating behaviours, or make you feel bad about yourself
Remember to take this tip with you as you meet new people once you start!
- ✔ Who will you call / text /email if you are having a bad day / feeling lonely or want to chat?

- ✔ Identify your 'triggers' and have a plan for dealing with them such as asking for extra support from family and friends
- ✔ Prepare yourself for asking for support by making a list of things that you would find helpful and things that you find unhelpful
- ✔ Think about who you will tell about your ED- think about the benefits of telling or not telling
- ✔ Think about how you might answer questions about your behaviour around food
- ✔ Stick with your eating disorder treatment plan. Prioritise your health and needs: attend offered treatment sessions
- ✔ Make time for activities that you enjoy. Try something new, pick up old hobbies or become a volunteer
- ✔ Avoid pro-ana and pro-mia websites. These sites are run by people who are not ready to leave their eating disorders behind and will get in the way of your recovery
- ✔ Be selective about who you follow on social media too. Sometimes influencers may appear to be promoting recovery, but if you are unsure it's always a good idea to ask someone who doesn't have an eating disorder what they think of the content being shared

Useful resources

There are a range of resources out there that you can use to support you. Below are resources that you may find helpful.

We recommend that you seek appropriate medical advice from your GP if you feel you need further support.

- ✓ BEAT is the UK's leading eating disorder charity. Through their website you can find local support in your area, information on eating disorders, how you can support yourself and how others can support you.

Things you might want to try

- ✓ Online chat rooms – BEAT has a range of confidential, monitored chat rooms specific to the eating problems you face including a chat room for carers. Times will vary depending on which chat room you want to access, however sessions run weekly and are accessible through the website below.
- ✓ Helplines – If it feels difficult reaching out to someone you've identified in your support network about your eating disorder, BEAT have a team of trained individuals who are there to listen to your problems. Helplines are open everyday, 12pm-8pm weekdays and 4pm-8pm at weekends.

- ✔ You can email BEAT for more information on onlineservices@beateatingdisorders.org.uk or access their website at: <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>
- ✔ Student Minds is a UK based charity supporting the mental health of students across the country. They work to support students and university communities to develop and share confidence and skills to look after your own mental health.
- ✔ To access more information and find out about the work Student Minds do, you can access their website at:
<http://www.studentminds.org.uk/about.html>

Contact our service

Savernake Hospital | London Road | Marlborough | SN8 3HL

Phone: 01865 904099

Accessibility

Patient information leaflets are available on our website:
www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets

Get in touch

Address Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Trust Headquarters
Littlemore Mental Health Centre
Sandford Road, Oxford OX4 4XN

Phone 01865 901 000

Email enquiries@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Website www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Feedback

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides advice and support to patients, families, and carers, helping to resolve any problems, concerns, or complaints you may have.

Phone 0800 328 7971

Email PALS@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Become a member of our foundation trust: **www.ohftnhs.uk/membership**

Support Oxford Health Charity, making a difference to patients, their families and staff who care for them: **www.oxfordhealth.charity**