

Effects of Restrictive Dieting & Starvation

Physical effects

- Decreased resting metabolic rate (RMR)
- Drop in sex hormones (estrogen, testosterone)
- Decreased sexual interest
- Amenorrhea (no menses)
- Bone loss
- Constipation and gastrointestinal upset
- Sleep disturbance
- Weakness
- Hypothermia (feeling cold all the time)
- Loss of lean body mass
- Changes in brain chemistry that increase appetite and food cravings.

Cognitive effects

- Decreased concentration
- Poor judgment
- Apathy

Effects on attitudes and behaviors towards food

- Food preoccupation
- Collection of recipes, cookbooks, and menus
- Unusual eating habits
- Increased consumption of coffee, tea, and diet sodas
- Increased use of spices
- Loss of body's natural mechanisms for regulating hunger and fullness
- Dichotomous thinking about food (i.e. "good food, bad food" mentality)- which increases risk of binge eating on the "bad."
- Binge eating

Emotional and social effects

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Irritability and anger
- Lability (ever-changing mood)
- Psychotic episodes
- Personality changes
- Social withdrawal