

THE BENEFITS OF A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TREATMENT TEAM

The Critical Components: Medical Doctor, Therapist, Dietitian, and YOU

Because your child's eating disorder is a psychiatric illness with severe medical and nutritional consequences, treatment is more complex than for many other diseases. Your daughter requires a different health-care professional to treat each aspect of her disease. We call this a "multidisciplinary treatment team," and it should include, at least, a medical doctor, a therapist, and a registered dietitian. *You* are also a critical member of your child's treatment team. Your role is to support your child and facilitate communication between team members (see pages 71 to 75 for specifics).

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of locating professionals who specialize in eating disorders. Treating these diseases requires specific skills and understanding. Ideally, you want team members who work with children or teens *and* specialize in eating disorders. This, however, may not be an option so at least try to find people with one of these specializations. Having one person on the team who specializes in eating disorders can make a significant difference. The concept of a "team" is critical. This means everyone needs to have a common approach to treatment and be in frequent communication with each other. As you will see below, each member of the team will focus on a different aspect of your daughter's illness.