

Patients need to be active participants in the treatment process to better understand the impulses, feelings, and needs that have resulted in their eating disorder. The goal is to increase the patient's feelings of control and responsibility toward achieving recovery. Eating disorders are complex and multifaceted. If possible, treatment should match patients' readiness to change ([Geller, Srikameswaran, Zelichowska, et al, 2012](#)). It is important to treat eating disorder patients with respect and support preservation of their self-esteem to promote a successful recovery ([Ozier and Henry, 2011](#)). Family therapy addresses dysfunctional roles, conflicts, alliances, and patterns that the eating disorder is precipitating or maintaining, while helping family members deal with the eating disorder.

Nursing Care Management

Nurses need to adopt and maintain a kind and supportive yet firm manner in managing the care of the adolescent with eating disorders without creating a passive-dependent attitude. The individual requires sustained support and reassurance to cope with ambivalent feelings related to body concept and the desire to be seen as cooperative, reliable, and worthy of receiving kindness. Encouraging the adolescent with education and activities that strengthen self-esteem facilitates the resocialization process and promotes social acceptance among peers.

It is important for nurses to be aware of the physical side effects of AN. Patients with AN frequently limit their fluid intake. Urinary tract problems are common, and ketones and protein may be detected in the urine as a result of breakdown of fat and protein. Vital sign instability can be severe and can include orthostatic hypotension; the pulse becomes irregular, and the rate decreases markedly. Bradycardia and hypothermia can result in cardiac arrest (see [Critical Thinking Case Study](#) box).

Critical Thinking Case Study

Anorexia Nervosa

Jane is a 13-year-old girl whose grades have been excellent and whom the teachers describe as a “model student.” Recently, Jane's