

Questions to Ask When Interviewing A Therapist

1. What is your experience and how long have you been treating eating disorders?
2. How are you licensed? What are your training credentials? Do you belong to the Academy for Eating Disorders (AED)? AED is a professional group that offers its members educational trainings every year. This doesn't prove that individuals are up-to-date, but it does increase the chances.
3. How would you describe your treatment style? Many different treatment styles exist. Different approaches may be more or less appropriate for your child and family depending on your child's situation and needs.
4. What kind of evaluation process do you use to recommend a treatment plan? Who all is involved in that planning?
5. What are the measurable criteria you use to assess how well treatment is working? Can you give me a few examples?
6. Do you use published clinical practice guidelines to guide your treatment planning for eating disorders? How?
7. What psychotherapeutic approaches and tools do you use?
8. How do you treat coexisting mental health conditions such as depression or anxiety?
9. How do you decide which approach is best for the patient? Do you ever use more than one approach? When?
10. What kind of medical information do you need? Will a medical evaluation be needed before my child begins treatment?
11. How will you work with my child's other doctors, such as medical doctors, who may need to provide care?
12. How often will you communicate with them?
13. Will you work with my child's school and teachers? How often do you communicate with them?
14. Will medication play a role in my child's treatment?
15. Do you work with a psychopharmacologist if medication seems indicated or do I find one on my own?
16. What is your availability in an emergency? If you are not available, what are my alternatives?

17. What are your criteria for determining whether a patient needs to be hospitalized?
18. What is your appointment availability? Do you offer afterwork or early morning appointments?
19. What happens in counseling sessions? If a particular session is upsetting for my child, will you advise me on how best to support my child?
20. How long does each counseling session last? How many will there be and how often?
21. How often will you meet with me/us as parents?
22. How do you involve key family members or friends?
23. What specific goals will be set for treatment and how will they be communicated?
24. How and when will progress be assessed?
25. How long will the treatment process take? How do you know when recovery is happening and therapy can stop?
26. Do you charge for phone calls or emails from patients or family between sessions? If so, what do you charge and how and to whom (insurance company or patient) is that billed?
27. Will you send me written information, a treatment plan, treatment price, etc.? The more information the therapist or facility is able to send in writing, the better informed you will be.
28. Do you deal directly with the insurer or do I need to do that?
29. When is payment due?
30. Are you reimbursable by insurance? What if I don't have insurance or mental health benefits under my health care plan? It is important for you to research your insurance coverage policy and what treatment alternatives are available in order for you and your treatment provider to design a treatment plan that suits your coverage.

With a careful search, the provider you select will be helpful. If the first time you meet is awkward, don't be discouraged. The first few appointments with any treatment provider can be challenging. It takes time to build trust when you are sharing highly personal information. If you continue feeling that a different therapeutic environment is needed, consider other providers.