



Diabetes Awareness Month: Certain eating disorder on the rise among type 1 diabetes patients

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RENO, Nev. - It's an eating disorder that is on the rise nationwide and it specifically affects people with type 1 diabetes. Diabulimia is when someone with type 1 diabetes purposefully stops taking insulin.

Dr. Lorraine Platka-Bird with the Center for Hope of the Sierras in Reno explains how a diabetes diagnosis for some, can turn into a downward spiral.

"A lot of diabetics when they are first diagnosed have lost a lot of weight and when they start treating with insulin they start gaining weight. So they're gone through that whole transition of losing weight and then having gained it back and then sometimes gain a little extra," Dr. Platka-Bird says.

Dr. Platka-Bird tells News 4 that's when patients can turn to drastic measures to gain control of their weight.

Diabulimia is a dangerous method that could really harm patients in the short and long term. Some of the more serious side effect include but are not limited to: neuropathy, stroke, even death.

Center for Hope of the Sierras in Reno is one of only three residential treatment centers nationwide that treats the disorder.

"It's very common because when someone is diagnosed with diabetes they're often told right away what they should not eat, what's bad for them, what they should stay away from, and it can set them up for eating disorder thoughts, disordered eating, and it turns into full blown eating disorders. So it's very dangerous physically," Katie Stout, the executive director of Center for Hope of the Sierra says.

The Center for Hope of the Sierras treats all types of eating disorders and is a residential treatment center for women 16 years and older.