

BECOME A PRESS AND RESEARCH CONTACT



beat keeps a database of members and supporters who are willing to share their experiences with the media or medical researchers. If you would like to be on the database you must fill in the attached form, which must be updated every 2 years as all records over 3 years old are destroyed in accordance with the Data protection act 1998.

This very detailed questionnaire enables us to select appropriate people to contact when we are approached by journalists or researchers. *beat* does not give out any names or personal information to journalists or researchers. We forward their requests for you to decide if you wish to respond, they never know who has been contacted.

Being on the database has a number of implications. Researchers generally want lengthy questionnaires filled in about your medical experiences, your treatment, the progression of your eating disorder and your feelings; whereas journalists and reporters may want to talk to you about your personal and family experiences, often at short notice.

We are usually asked to contact specific groups of people - for example: people with anorexia or bulimia; people who have recovered; specific age groups; carers; men with eating problems; living in a specific area; people who have used slimming aids etc. The information you provide in the questionnaire should ensure requests for help, which are not relevant to you, will be kept to an absolute minimum. If you join the database you may find that some people will be contacted very soon, others may not receive an enquiry for several months, but rest assured you will not have been forgotten.

Do think about the issues involved if you decide to appear in a newspaper or magazine and whether you will feel comfortable about having a photograph taken (many publications do want a picture and they may ask if you have any older photographs). Television requests can vary from serious documentaries to chat show or even confrontational programmes in front of a live audience and can sometimes be quite stressful. Radio interviews may take place over the phone or they might ask you to go into a studio.

If you have any queries or concerns about being a Media and Research Contact, or if you want to talk about any request we have sent to you, please don't hesitate to e-mail me at media@b-eat.co.uk or ring the media-line on 0870 770 3221. If the answerphone is on, please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

If any of your details change - e-mail (particularly important as we only use e-mail for urgent press and TV enquiries), address, phone number or experience of treatment for example - please let us know as soon as possible so that we can keep our records up to date.

Taking to the press and media

For the sake of simplicity, we have used the terms '*the media*' and '*journalist*' to cover journalists working on newspapers or magazines, reporters working in radio or on television and researchers working on radio or television programmes. We have used the term '*researcher*' to cover someone working in, or studying medicine, psychology or a related scientific field.

Researchers usually ask us to find fairly specific groups of people to fit their research criteria. Often they will want a very detailed questionnaire filled in, sometimes with a follow up questionnaire some time later, occasionally they may wish to interview you in person.

When you are dealing with *journalists*, do bear in mind they will always be happy to call you back to save you the cost of a long phone call, and although they may not always be able to pay a fee you should not be

afraid to ask (even if you don't wish to receive a fee *beat* is always grateful for donations). Nevertheless they should always pay for any lost work time, expenses, travel or accommodation costs you or anyone helping you incurs. One other thing to remember is that especially with news items, they may decide to drop the story at the last moment.

Please remember if you are asked a question that you don't know how to answer or would feel awkward answering be honest and say you don't know, never make up an answer.

Do think about the issues involved if you decide to appear in a newspaper or magazine and whether you will feel comfortable about having a photograph taken (Most publications do want a picture and they may ask if you have any older photographs). Think carefully if you are asked to sign any form of contract, you may wish to speak to other organisations and they may wish to prevent you doing that, we consider that a couple of months may be reasonable but not longer unless they pay you well. Their contract may ask you to allow 'syndication' in other words they may want to sell your story to other publications. If you are uncomfortable about this you do not have to sign or you can have this clause deleted. Talk to us if you are concerned about anything at all.

Television requests can vary from serious documentaries to chat show or confrontational programmes in front of an audience and can sometimes be quite stressful. Radio interviews can sometimes take place over the phone or they may ask you to go into a nearby studio.

Appearing on TV can be very interesting but it can also be very stressful. If the programme is a documentary or news programme, then the crew will probably come to you, at home or work. If however the programme is a discussion or chat show then it will probably be shot in a studio. If you need to travel or stay away overnight then do consider taking a friend along (The TV Company will pay!), it can be very lonely in a strange hotel room in an unfamiliar town.

If you have any queries or concerns about being a Media and Research Contact, or if you want to talk about any request we have sent to you, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Tips for Media Interviews

- ✓ Think in advance of answers that cannot be misquoted or quoted out of context.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to discuss it with the journalist in advance - they will also want a good interview.
- ✓ Try practising an interview with a friend; get them to give you a hard time!
- ✓ How personal will you be? Make it clear to the interviewer what you will / will not discuss.
- ✓ Give some literature to the interviewer- if they read it in advance they will have some background information. If the interview is in response to a news item, are you well briefed?
- ✓ Make sure you are wearing something comfortable and not too bright or fussy
- ✓ Know your venue; check on the day that the interview is still going ahead, that it's on time.
- ✓ If it's for the press or radio take a few cards in with you with your 2/3 main points - remember your main message.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to take your time in answering-or even not to answer. If you don't know what to say or would feel awkward answering, be honest and say you don't know.
- ✓ Never make up an answer - you will always regret it. A silence will signal to the interviewer that you won't answer with regard that issue.
- ✓ Don't let journalists trick you into giving more information than you wanted to.
- ✓ If it's a studio discussion ask who else will be there, you can always say no if you have concerns.
- ✓ Make sure you are happy if you are asked to sign a contract

Please read the notes enclosed about being a media or research contact before filling in this form.

Remember this information is to help us select appropriate people from our database in response to specific enquiries. The information is confidential and will not be passed to any third party. In all cases the questions are about you and your experience, not any other member of your family. Please do not alter the form. Please pick the nearest answer when there is not an exact match.

SECTION 'A' ABOUT YOU...

Your full name (please print)

Are you?

Male / Female (circle)

beat Member / *beat* Supporter / Neither (circle)

Address

.....

County Post Code.....

Home phone Number..... (Please include the full number including the area code)

Mobile phone.....

Work phone

(IMPORTANT PLEASE PRINT VERY CAREFULLY) e-mail address *beat* can use to contact you

.....

Can *beat* phone you:

during the day? Yes / No (circle)

at Work? Yes / No

Your date of birth (day / month / year)

Which of the following would you consider taking part in? (Please tick all that apply)

- Student Research
- Medical Research
- Authors/Scriptwriters Research
- TV / Video programme
- Radio programme
- Internet Item
- Newspaper Item
- Magazine Item

Would you consider permitting the use of a photograph? Yes / No

Do you personally have (Please tick all that apply)

- Anorexia nervosa
- Bulimia nervosa
- Binge eating disorder
- Compulsive Overeating
- Obesity
- Other

Are you (please tick all that apply)

- A person with an eating disorder or still recovering from an eating disorder
- Recovered from an eating disorder
- Parent/Guardian of someone with an eating disorder
- Sister or Brother of someone with an eating disorder
- A Twin of someone with an eating disorder
- Grandparent or other relative of someone with an eating disorder
- Friend of a person with an eating disorder

**If you have an eating disorder please continue answering the questions in section A & B
If you do not have an eating disorder or are a friend or carer please go on to section C**

Age your eating disorder began (if known).....

Duration of eating disorder before treatment sought (if known).....

Current relationship status:

single / married / Civil Partnership / co-habiting / separated / divorced / widowed

Do you have any children? Yes / No (Please circle)

Do you have any employment/work experience? Yes / No (Please circle)

If yes, please tick the groups which is the nearest match to your own work experience

- Model / Fashion
- Actor/Actress
- Sport
- Dancer
- Factory / workshop floor
- Office / Retail
- Management
- Communications / PR
- Entertainment / Media
- Medical / Mental Health
- Education / Nursery
- Social Care / Carer
- Farming / Outdoor
- Catering / Leisure Services

Have you ever abused laxatives? Yes / No (Please circle)

Have you ever abused any drugs or alcohol? Yes / No

Have you ever taken slimming pills or other slimming treatments? Yes / No

Have you any personal experience of slimming clinics? Yes / No

Have you ever self harmed? Yes / No

Do you believe there was a specific reason you developed an eating disorder. If so please tick any/all items which apply to you

- Previous Mental Health Problem
- Parent, Grandparent, or Carer with an eating disorder
- Bereavement
- Parents Relationship breakdown
- Personal Relationship breakdown
- Childbirth
- Abuse / Bullying
- Moving location
- Academic / Exam pressure
- Family Pressure
- Employment problems/pressure
- Sport / Exercise / Athletics / Gymnastics
- Dancing
- Modelling
- Media / Acting
- Other

(This question is optional) *beat* is often approached by journalists from ethnic publications, radio and TV companies. If you are willing to share your experiences about your own personal ethnic and cultural background please tick the appropriate box:

- African
- Afro Caribbean
- Asian
- Chinese
- Eastern European

SECTION 'B' ABOUT TREATMENT

Have you had any form of treatment for your eating disorder? Yes / No

Have you ever been (Please tick all that apply)

- Tube-fed
- Force-fed
- Treated under 'section'

Do you feel the treatment you received was appropriate? Yes / No

Was all treatment within your own County or within 50 miles of your Home? Yes / No

Have you had any experience of therapy by CD Rom, e-mail or the internet? Yes / No

Have you had any experience of self help support? Yes / No

SECTION 'C' OTHER MATTERS

(Optional) The following are ongoing factors which are experienced by some people.

Do any apply to you personally? (Please tick all that apply)

- Family break-up or adoption
- Shoplifting
- Career affected
- Study affected
- Vegetarian
- Child affected
- Alcoholic parent/carer/grandparent
- Abuse within your family
- Excessive exercise
- Violent relationship/s
- Religious pressures
- Relative has an eating disorder
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual orientation
- Associated medical or mental health conditions
- Bullying
- Post Natal Depression (Baby Blues)

Have you used the Internet to find information about eating disorders? Yes / No

Have you visited any 'Pro Anna' or 'Pro-mia' Websites on the Internet? Yes / No

Please only answer the next question if you personally have, or have had an eating disorder

Have 'Pro Anna' or 'Pro mia' Websites affected or influenced you at all? Yes / No

Please only answer the next question if you are a parent or carer

Do you believe 'Pro Anna' or 'Pro mia' Websites affected or influenced the person you care for in any way? Yes / No

Have you used the Internet to find or buy slimming or other drugs? Yes / No

Do you have any experience of developing osteoporosis (thinning bones)? Yes / No

SECTION 'D' QUESTIONS FOR & ABOUT CARERS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Please answer any questions that apply to you, please leave blank any that do not apply.

Is there any family history of an eating disorder? Yes / No (Please circle)

How many people in the family of the main person with an eating disorder are affected by an eating disorder? (Please circle)

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

Are any of the people with an eating disorder twins? Yes / No (Please circle)

Please only answer the next question if you are prepared to discuss bereavement with researchers or the media. If you would prefer not to talk about bereavement please leave this question unanswered.

Do you have personal experience of bereavement due to an eating disorder (If yes please tick)

Please sign below and return the form to:

beat (media and research contacts)
103 Prince of Wales Road
Norwich
NR1 1DW

Your SignatureDate.....