

# Consequences of Chewing and Spitting

Chew and Spit (CHSP) is the repeated chewing up of food and spitting it out before swallowing. Repeated CHSP is often attempted by individuals in order to control body weight or shape, but has been linked to a number of complications. Frequently engaging in CHSP is associated with increased psychological distress, poorer health related quality of life, and may also be associated with physiological complications, including eventual weight regain. CHSP is an **ineffective method to control weight**, as researchers hypothesise that the body responds and adapts to frequent use of CHSP and may lead to oral or digestive complications.

Impacts of CHSP far out weigh any perceived benefit of the behaviour. If you are struggling with CHSP, please speak to a health professional.

## Psychological Consequences

People that engage in the behaviour of CHSP tend to report lower quality of life, related to both their mental and physical health. While some people claim that CHSP can be temporarily pleasurable; distress and other negative feelings soon inevitably follow. Most notably, people experience an increase in feelings of shame and guilt, as well as intrusive thoughts. These can lead to increased anxiety, depression, and loneliness.

Some people who CHSP sometimes engage in 'binge-type' episodes, where they CHSP lots of food in a very short time. This in turn leads them to feel out of control and trapped in a CHSP cycle.

CHSP has been reported to be very addictive by its nature and people can also feel trapped in a vicious cycle. People may plan a CHSP episode, and perform particular 'rituals' or behaviours in conjunction to CHSP. This can become very exhausting and ultimately provides no benefit.

## Physical Consequences

Given the mental and physical energy required by someone engaging in CHSP, the cycle can leave some feeling very fatigued and exhausted. CHSP can also cause dental issues such as oral infections, broken teeth, and mouth ulcers.

## Social Consequences

CHSP can take over someone's life; leading an individual to invest a great deal of energy into maintaining the behaviour. This places a great deal of strain on friendships, families, and personal relationships. People may become quite isolated as they push away their friends and family in order to CHSP.

## References:

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