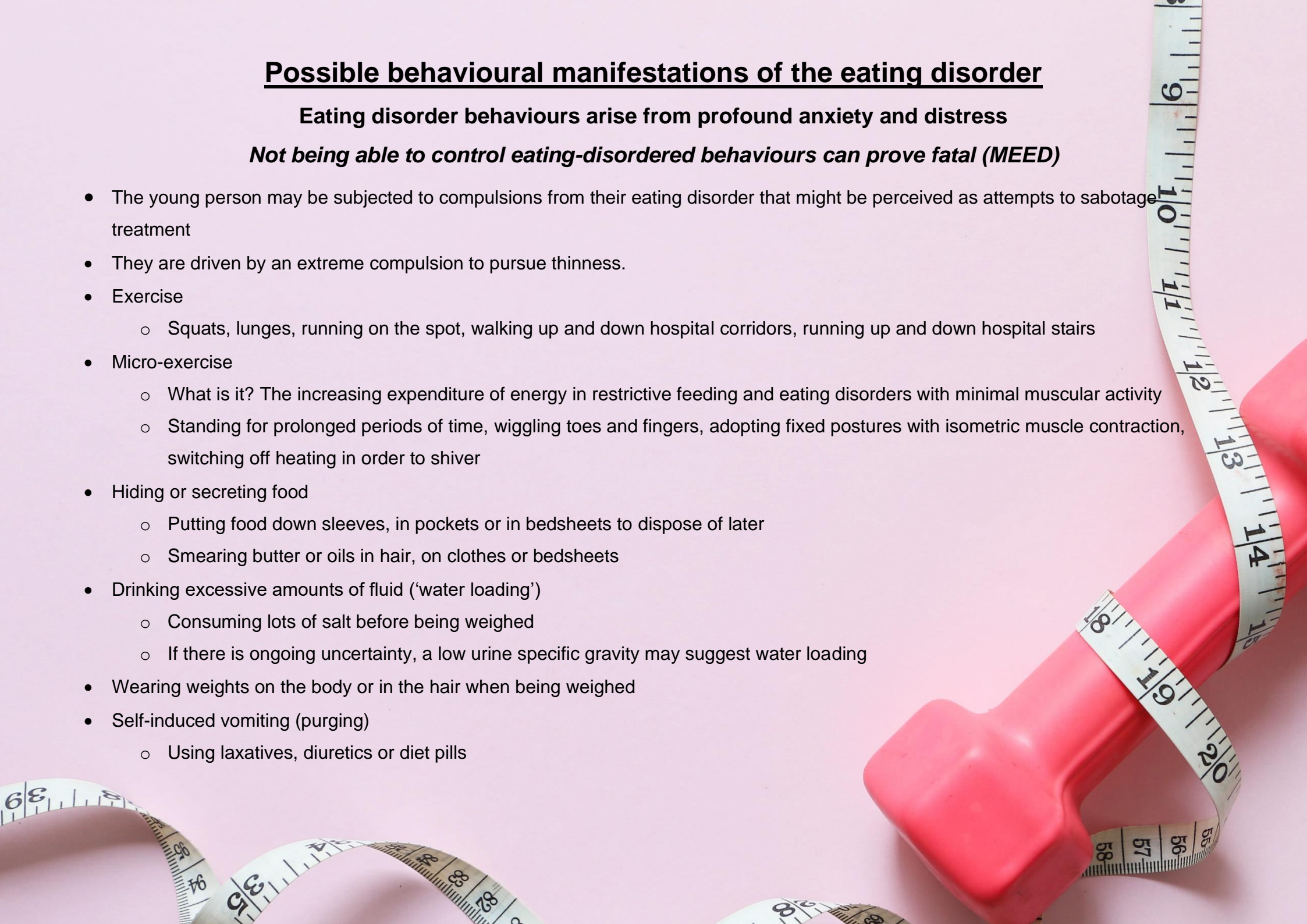


Possible behavioural manifestations of the eating disorder

Eating disorder behaviours arise from profound anxiety and distress

Not being able to control eating-disordered behaviours can prove fatal (MEED)

- The young person may be subjected to compulsions from their eating disorder that might be perceived as attempts to sabotage treatment
- They are driven by an extreme compulsion to pursue thinness.
- Exercise
 - Squats, lunges, running on the spot, walking up and down hospital corridors, running up and down hospital stairs
- Micro-exercise
 - What is it? The increasing expenditure of energy in restrictive feeding and eating disorders with minimal muscular activity
 - Standing for prolonged periods of time, wiggling toes and fingers, adopting fixed postures with isometric muscle contraction, switching off heating in order to shiver
- Hiding or secreting food
 - Putting food down sleeves, in pockets or in bedsheets to dispose of later
 - Smearing butter or oils in hair, on clothes or bedsheets
- Drinking excessive amounts of fluid ('water loading')
 - Consuming lots of salt before being weighed
 - If there is ongoing uncertainty, a low urine specific gravity may suggest water loading
- Wearing weights on the body or in the hair when being weighed
- Self-induced vomiting (purging)
 - Using laxatives, diuretics or diet pills



SCAMHS role in management of behavioural manifestations of the eating disorder

One-to-one observation and support

- SCAMHS Eating Disorder Team will provide a Paediatric Liaison Eating Disorder Nurse (Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm), who will be based on the paediatric ward, on a supernumerary basis in order to offer intensive eating disorder support to the young person and the family during their admission.
- This should include supervision of mealtimes and post-mealtimes, in addition to engaging the young person in distraction work to limit the manifesting of eating disorder behaviours.
- This also supports the eating disorder assessment process and is a key part of learning about the young person and their presentation and the challenges they are experiencing.

Structured collaboration between staff and patients

- SCAMHS Eating Disorder team will support the young person, family, and nursing staff in recognising and understanding the illness. Conveying to the young person that staff have knowledge about potential weight loss behaviours is an important element of providing a safe nursing environment.
- Structured plans, with good nursing documentation, will help to maintain consistent care and will help to avoid disagreements between the young person, their family, and staff.

Involving parents and carers

- Sometimes, involving parents and carers in spotting and managing eating disorder behaviours is not straightforward.
- Parents are often very anxious and distressed about their young person's presentation.
- SCAMHS Eating Disorder team will support the family to spot signs during mealtimes or during rest periods and will role-model how to address these behaviours with the young person directly.