



Cristin Runfola

Clinical Professor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

CLINICAL OFFICE (PRIMARY)

- **Psychiatry Clinic**

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Bio

BIO

Dr. Cristin Runfola specializes in the treatment and research of eating disorders and relational concerns. Her work focuses on improving outcomes through innovative, evidence-based interventions, including individual and couple-based approaches delivered in person and via digital platforms. She co-developed UNITE, a couple-based intervention for eating disorders, founded the EMBODY peer education initiative, and recently piloted a virtual reality cue exposure therapy (VR-CET) for binge eating. She has served as a study therapist in multiple clinical trials. She regularly publishes her work, presents nationally and internationally, teaches in the Stanford–Palo Alto University PsyD Consortium, and holds leadership roles within the Academy for Eating Disorders (AED).

Dr. Runfola currently provides outpatient treatment to individuals and couples within the Eating Disorders Clinic, Couples and Family Therapy Clinic, and Adult Depression and Anxiety Disorders Clinic.

CLINICAL FOCUS

- Eating disorders
- Couples
- Clinical Psychology

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Clinical Professor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Chairman's Award for Clinical Innovation and Service, Stanford University (2022)
- Clinician Scholarship Award, Academy for Eating Disorders (AED) (2015)
- OTCF Award (for service and dedication to the UNC Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2012)
- Martin S. Wallach Award for Outstanding Clinical Psychology Intern of the Year, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2011)
- Early Career Investigator Travel Fellowship Award, National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) / Academy for Eating Disorders (AED) (2009)

- Top Fundraising Award, National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) (2009)
- Superior Research Award, American Psychological Association (APA) (2008)
- Fellowship Award, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology (2006 – 2008)

BOARDS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- 2022 ICED Scientific Committee Member, Academy for Eating Disorders (2021 - 2022)
- Member, Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT) (2019 - present)
- Member, Association for Contextual Behavioral Science (ACBS) (2016 - present)
- Member, California Psychological Association (CPA) (2016 - present)
- Editorial Board, Eating Disorders: The Journal of Treatment and Prevention (2015 - present)
- Co-Chair, Membership Recruitment and Retention Committee, Academy for Eating Disorders (2013 - 2018)
- Member, Binge Eating Disorder Association (BEDA) (2011 - present)
- Member, Academy for Eating Disorders (AED) (2005 - present)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Fellowship: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2013) NC
- Internship: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2011) NC
- PhD Training: Palo Alto University/Pacific Graduate School of Psychology (2011) CA

COMMUNITY AND INTERNATIONAL WORK

- Embody Carolina: Providing Eating Disorder Support with Peer Education, North Carolina

Research & Scholarship

CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

Dr. Runfola's research focuses on the epidemiology of dysregulated eating and weight concerns in undeserved populations and her primary interest is in developing and testing the efficacy of clinical interventions designed to improve outcome for eating disorders.

With support from GFED, Dr. Runfola adapted the Uniting Couples in the treatment of Anorexia Nervosa (UCAN) therapy manual for couples in which one or both members have binge-eating disorder (UNITE) and recently completed pilot testing on this treatment. She is in the process of expanding this treatment for all couples affected by binge eating, and is submitting a grant to fund future work testing efficacy.

PROJECTS

- Enhancing Treatment for Binge-Eating Disorder with a Couple-Based Approach - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1/1/2014 - present)
- Improving Detection and Treatment of Eating Disorders - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2013 - 2015)
- Developing and Pilot testing a Cognitive-Behavioral Couple Therapy (CBCT) Manual for Binge-Eating Disorder - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2013 - 2015)
- Anorexia Nervosa Genetics Initiative (ANGI) - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2011 - 2016)
- Night Eating Syndrome in Pediatric Eating Disorders Patients - Palo Alto University (2010 - 2010)
- Uniting Couples in the treatment of Anorexia Nervosa (UCAN) - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Bulimia Nervosa (CBT4BN) - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Psychotherapy-Supported Lisdexamfetamine Tapering in Binge-Eating Disorder: Spotlighting a Critical Research Gap.** *The International journal of eating disorders*
Runfola, C. D., Safer, D. L.
2026
- **The role of eco-anxiety in the presentation of bulimia nervosa: a case report.** *Journal of eating disorders*
Runfola, C. D., Safer, D. L.
2024; 12 (1): 164
- **Interpersonal dynamics of vocal fundamental frequency in couples: Depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, and relationship distress.** *Behaviour research and therapy*
Fischer, M. S., Baucom, D. H., Weber, D. M., Bauer, D. J., Munion, A. K., Porter, L. S., Christensen, A., Bulik, C. M., Whisman, M. A., Abramowitz, J. S., Kirby, J. S., Runfola, C. D., Ditzgen, et al
2024; 180: 104571
- **A Pilot Multisensory Approach for Emotional Eating: Pivoting from Virtual Reality to a 2-D Telemedicine Intervention during the COVID-19 Pandemic.** *Journal of clinical medicine*
Malighetti, C., Schnitzer, C. K., YorkWilliams, S. L., Bernardelli, L., Runfola, C. D., Riva, G., Safer, D. L.
2023; 12 (23)
- **An exploratory investigation of predictors of outcome in face-to-face and online cognitive-behavioural therapy for bulimia nervosa.** *European eating disorders review : the journal of the Eating Disorders Association*
Matherne, C. E., Watson, H., Fassnacht, D. B., Ali, K., Zerwas, S., Peat, C., Runfola, C., Levine, M. D., Marcus, M. D., Zimmer, B., Moessner, M., Crosby, R., Bulik, et al
2022
- **Translating Virtual Reality Cue Exposure Therapy for Binge Eating into a Real-World Setting: An Uncontrolled Pilot Study.** *Journal of clinical medicine*
Nameth, K., Brown, T., Bullock, K., Adler, S., Riva, G., Safer, D., Runfola, C.
2021; 10 (7)
- **Translating Virtual Reality Cue Exposure Therapy for Binge Eating into a Real-World Setting: An Uncontrolled Pilot Study** *JOURNAL OF CLINICAL MEDICINE*
Nameth, K., Brown, T., Bullock, K., Adler, S., Riva, G., Safer, D., Runfola, C.
2021; 10 (7)
- **Bringing Virtual Reality From Clinical Trials to Clinical Practice for the Treatment of Eating Disorders: An Example Using Virtual Reality Cue Exposure Therapy.** *Journal of medical Internet research*
Brown, T., Nauman Vogel, E., Adler, S., Bohon, C., Bullock, K., Nameth, K., Riva, G., Safer, D. L., Runfola, C. D.
2020; 22 (4): e16386
- **The offspring of parents undergoing a weight loss surgery: asystematicreview.** *Surgery for obesity and related diseases : official journal of the American Society for Bariatric Surgery*
Dickens, C. E., Safer, D. L., Runfola, C. D., Gibbs, E. L., Welch, H., Sadeh-Sharvit, S.
2020
- **Parent-based prevention after parental weight loss surgery: a pilot case-series trial.** *Surgery for obesity and related diseases : official journal of the American Society for Bariatric Surgery*
Sadeh-Sharvit, S. n., Runfola, C. D., Welch, H. A., Gibbs, E. L., Dickens, C. E., Lock, J. n., Safer, D. L.
2020
- **Body dissatisfaction in adolescent boys.** *Developmental psychology*
Baker, J. H., Higgins Neyland, M. K., Thornton, L. M., Runfola, C. D., Larsson, H., Lichtenstein, P., Bulik, C.
2019
- **PILOT OF A REMOTELY-DELIVERED INTERVENTION TO IMPROVE DIETARY ADHERENCE AND WEIGHT-LOSS OUTCOMES IN POST-BARIATRIC PATIENTS**

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- Salcido, L., Osipov, L., Runfola, C. D., Barrett, M., Safer, D. L., Adler, S.
OXFORD UNIV PRESS INC.2019: S95
- **Interventions to Empower Adults with Eating Disorders and Their Partners around the Transition to Parenthood.** *Family process*
Sadeh-Sharvit, S. n., Sacks, M. R., Runfola, C. D., Bulik, C. M., Lock, J. D.
2019
 - **Parenting after Weight Loss Surgery: A Conceptual Model and Two Case Reports.** *Family process*
Gibbs, E. L., Runfola, C. D., Dickens, C. E., Welch, H. n., Safer, D. L., Sadeh-Sharvit, S. n.
2019
 - **A pilot open trial of UNITE-BED: A couple-based intervention for binge-eating disorder.** *The International journal of eating disorders*
Runfola, C. D., Kirby, J. S., Baucom, D. H., Fischer, M. S., Baucom, B. R., Matherne, C. E., Pentel, K. Z., Bulik, C. M.
2018
 - **Cost-Effectiveness of Internet-Based Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment for Bulimia Nervosa: Results of a Randomized Controlled Trial** *JOURNAL OF CLINICAL PSYCHIATRY*
Watson, H. J., McLagan, N., Zerwas, S. C., Crosby, R. D., Levine, M. D., Runfola, C. D., Peat, C. M., Moessner, M., Zimmer, B., Hofmeier, S. M., Hamer, R. M., Marcus, M. D., Bulik, et al
2018; 79 (1)
 - **The Association between Symptom Accommodation and Emotional Coregulation in Couples with Binge Eating Disorder.** *Family process*
Weber, D. M., Fischer, M. S., Baucom, D. H., Baucom, B. R., Kirby, J. S., Runfola, C. D., Matherne, C. E., Bulik, C. M.
2018
 - **Potential Predictors of Injury Among Pre-Professional Ballet and Contemporary Dancers.** *Journal of dance medicine & science : official publication of the International Association for Dance Medicine & Science*
Yau, R. K., Golightly, Y. M., Richardson, D. B., Runfola, C. D., Waller, A. E., Marshall, S. W.
2017; 21 (2): 53-63
 - **The Core Symptoms of Bulimia Nervosa, Anxiety, and Depression: A Network Analysis** *JOURNAL OF ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY*
Levinson, C. A., Zerwas, S., Calebs, B., Forbush, K., Kordy, H., Watson, H., Hofmeier, S., Levine, M., Crosby, R. D., Peat, C., Runfola, C. D., Zimmer, B., Moesner, et al
2017; 126 (3): 340-354
 - **CBT4BN: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Online Chat and Face-to-Face Group Therapy for Bulimia Nervosa** *PSYCHOTHERAPY AND PSYCHOSOMATICS*
Zerwas, S. C., Watson, H. J., Hofmeier, S. M., Levine, M. D., Hamer, R. M., Crosby, R. D., Runfola, C. D., Peat, C. M., Shapiro, J. R., Zimmer, B., Moessner, M., Kordy, H., Marcus, et al
2017; 86 (1): 47-53
 - **Body image, aging, and identity in women over 50: The Gender and Body Image (GABI) study.** *Journal of women & aging*
Hofmeier, S. M., Runfola, C. D., Sala, M., Gagne, D. A., Brownley, K. A., Bulik, C. M.
2016: 1-12
 - **Eating disorders in midlife women: A perimenopausal eating disorder?** *MATURITAS*
Baker, J. H., Runfola, C. D.
2016; 85: 112-116
 - **Familial Liability for Eating Disorders and Suicide Attempts Evidence From a Population Registry in Sweden** *JAMA PSYCHIATRY*
Yao, S., Kuja-Halkola, R., Thornton, L. M., Runfola, C. D., D'Onofrio, B. M., Almqvist, C., Lichtenstein, P., Sjolander, A., Larsson, H., Bulik, C. M.
2016; 73 (3): 284-291
 - **Sex- and Age-Specific Incidence of Healthcare-Register-Recorded Eating Disorders in the Complete Swedish 1979-2001 Birth Cohort** *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EATING DISORDERS*
Javaras, K. N., Runfola, C. D., Thornton, L. M., Agerbo, E., Birgegard, A., Norring, C., Yao, S., Rastam, M., Larsson, H., Lichtenstein, P., Bulik, C. M.
2015; 48 (8): 1070-1081
 - **Couple-Based Interventions for Adults With Eating Disorders** *EATING DISORDERS*
Kirby, J. S., Runfola, C. D., Fischer, M. S., Baucom, D. H., Bulik, C. M.
2015; 23 (4): 356-365
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- **Prevalence and Clinical Significance of Night Eating Syndrome in University Students** *JOURNAL OF ADOLESCENT HEALTH*
Runfola, C. D., Allison, K. C., Hardy, K. K., Lock, J., Peebles, R.
2014; 55 (1): 41-48
- **Self-image and suicide in a Swedish national eating disorders clinical register** *COMPREHENSIVE PSYCHIATRY*
Runfola, C. D., Thornton, L. M., Pisetsky, E. M., Bulik, C. M., Birgegard, A.
2014; 55 (3): 439-449
- **NURTURE: Development and Pilot Testing of a Novel Parenting Intervention for Mothers with Histories of an Eating Disorder** *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EATING DISORDERS*
Runfola, C. D., Zucker, N. L., Von Holle, A., Mazzeo, S., Hodges, E. A., Perrin, E. M., Bentley, M. E., Ulman, T. F., Hoffman, E. R., Forsberg, S., Algars, M., Zerwas, S., Pisetsky, et al
2014; 47 (1): 1-12
- **Characteristics of Women with Body Size Satisfaction at Midlife: Results of the Gender and Body Image (GABI) Study** *JOURNAL OF WOMEN & AGING*
Runfola, C. D., Von Holle, A., Peat, C. M., Gagne, D. A., Brownley, K. A., Hofmeier, S. M., Bulik, C. M.
2013; 25 (4): 287-304
- **Body Dissatisfaction in Women Across the Lifespan: Results of the UNC-SELF and Gender and Body Image (GABI) Studies** *EUROPEAN EATING DISORDERS REVIEW*
Runfola, C. D., Von Holle, A., Trace, S. E., Brownley, K. A., Hofmeier, S. M., Gagne, D. A., Bulik, C. M.
2013; 21 (1): 52-59
- **Eating disorder symptoms and weight and shape concerns in a large web-based convenience sample of women ages 50 and above: Results of the gender and body image (GABI) study** *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EATING DISORDERS*
Gagne, D. A., Von Holle, A., Brownley, K. A., Runfola, C. D., Hofmeier, S., Branch, K. E., Bulik, C. M.
2012; 45 (7): 832-844
- **Sleep problems are associated with binge eating in women** *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EATING DISORDERS*
Trace, S. E., Thornton, L. M., Runfola, C. D., Lichtenstein, P., Pedersen, N. L., Bulik, C. M.
2012; 45 (5): 695-703
- **CLINICAL SEVERITY OF NIGHT EATING SYNDROME IN EATING DISORDERED ADOLESCENTS: A CASE SERIES**
Runfola, C., Payne, A., Allison, K., Lock, J., Peebles, R.
ELSEVIER SCIENCE INC.2012: S62-S63