



Minds Matter and Garfield Athletics

Trigger Warning

This presentation discusses the warning signs of eating disorders, eating disorders in the athletic community, and how to get help with eating disorders. If these topics are challenging, please take care of yourself or step out of this presentation.

Types of Eating Disorders

Anorexia Nervosa: Eating disorder characterized by an intense fear of gaining weight and a distorted perception of weight. Often is accompanied by compulsive exercise disorder.

Bulimia Nervosa: Involving repeated and secretive episodic bouts of eating characterized by uncontrolled rapid ingestion of large quantities of food over a short period of time, followed by self-induced vomiting and other means

Binge-eating disorder: Involving periods of extreme overeating, often followed by guilt, intense shame, and self loathing, but not followed by purging behaviors.

Orthorexia Nervosa: Involves an obsession with healthy eating and optimal nutrition (rise of this disorder corresponding with the rise of diet culture)

Other Specified Eating Disorder: eating disorders that fall outside the specific categories.

Warning Signs/Symptoms

Dramatic weight change
Loss or decrease of menstruation or libido
Frequent fainting or dizziness
Poor sleep
Lethargy
Feeling cold in not cold circumstances
Signs of damage from vomiting
Going through recipes
Watching others eat
Drinking excessive liquid/not drinking enough
Social withdrawal
Body checking
Looking over pictures
Hiding food

Dieting (counting calories, fasting, fixation with caloric deficit)
Avoiding group food settings
Binging
Disappearance shortly after meals
Using drugs to decrease hunger or laxatives
Covering up using clothing more frequently
Secretive food habits
Obsession with food
Cooking for others without eating
Tracking food intake

Eating Disorders and Exercise

Exercise can contribute to eating disorders when the focus shifts away from enjoyment and athletics to a way to burn energy or an obsession with athletic ability.

Warning signs that a relationship with exercise is becoming unhealthy include:

- Inability to take days off, or extreme anxiety on days not exercising
- Exercise interferes with social life
- Only eating on days when you exercise
- Tracking number of calorie burned when exercised, ranking workouts based off of caloric output
- Continuing to exercise through injury

Disordered Thoughts/Behaviors in Athletes Looks Like

- Exercising through injury
- Tracking calories (both input and output)
- Not eating when hungry
- Only eating on days when exercise
- Restricting food intake
- Binging on food
- Only eating from certain groups (IE obsession with protein)
- Feeling a need to constantly be exercising
- Overuse injuries

What To Do If You Are Exhibiting Symptoms of an Eating Disorder or Over Exercise

Reach out to your coach immediately. This does not mean you have to stop your sport, but it means you have to be thoughtful and deliberate about how your exercise is contributing to disordered thinking and behaviors and what the best plan is going forward.

Make an appointment with your primary care physician to discuss how you are doing, make a treatment plan, and get access to resources.

Find a mental health provider, such as a therapist, to talk to.

Find a dietician to talk to, preferably one that specializes in sports and eating disorder nutrition.

Reach out. Eating disorders are not something to be ashamed of. Being honest with friends, family, doctors, and coaches is the best way to recover and live a healthy, happy life.

What To Do If a Friend is Exhibiting Symptoms of an Eating Disorder or Over Exercise

Talk to them. Do not accuse them, or make them feel attacked, but express your concerns, encourage them to get help, and offer your emotional support. Offer professional resources they could utilize.

If you are on the same team, express your concerns with the coach. It is important they are aware of how their athletes are doing and can offer their support.

Model behavior. Practice an all foods fit mindset, eat intuitively, and exercise mindfully.

Questions for Discussion

What is your team culture around food, body image, and exercise?

What language is used around food and exercise?

How does exercise help or damage your mental health?

Have you ever felt pressure to change your body for your sport?

Why does society characterize certain body types as “fit” or “strong”? How has this impacted you?

How can your team support you living in a world as an athlete in diet culture?

Resources for Eating Disorders

National Eating Disorder Association Helpline: 1-800-931-2237

Nationaleatingdisorders.org

BulimiaHelp.org – online program and support for bulimia.

CaringOnline.com – Information and resources on Eating Disorders.

Eating Disorder Referral and Information Center – EDReferral.com provides information and treatment resources for all forms of eating disorders.

N.A.M.E.D. – The National Association for Males with Eating Disorders: is to provide support to males with eating disorders, to educate the public on the issue, and to be a resource of information on the subject.

ANAD – National Assoc of Anorexia Nervosa & Related Disorders: The National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, Inc. is a non-profit corporation which seeks to alleviate the problems of eating disorders, especially anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa.

Sources

<https://www.runnersworld.com/uk/nutrition/a34963527/disordered-eating-runners/>

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/learn/help/caregivers>

<https://www.mavoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/anorexia-nervosa/symptoms-causes/svc-20353591#:~:text=Anorexia%20%28an-o-REK-see-uh%29%20nervosa%20%E2%80%94%20often%20simply%20called%20anorexia.gaining%20weight%20and%20a%20distorted%20perception%20of%20weight>

<https://nedc.com.au/support-and-services-2/supporting-someone/understanding-the-warning-signs/>