EVERY BODY BELONGS HERE

NEDA

Tips for Coaches: Eating Disorders & Mental Health

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As a coach or athletic trainer, you are often the first to notice subtle changes that may indicate an eating disorder. Recognizing these signs early and connecting athletes to support is critical to preventing long-term harm and promoting recovery.

Signs to Look Out For

- Decreased concentration, energy, muscle function, coordination, endurance, and speed.
- Increased fatigue, dizziness, abdominal pain, and extreme changes in mood such as irritability or impatience.
- Excessive training beyond what is required for sport.

How to Help an Athlete

- Consult a mental health provider and review your organization's eating disorder policy before intervening.
- Approach athletes privately. Be direct and nonjudgmental.
- Encourage treatment with specialists and support the care team's plan.
- Eliminate weight, size, and diet-focused comments and messaging.

Things to Remember

- Eating disorders affect athletes of all genders, body types, sports, and competition levels.
- Only a qualified expert can diagnose an eating disorder.

Visit nationaleatingdisorders.org for free tools, information, and resources.