



STUDENT-ATHLETE

MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT



FACT SHEET

Depression

Depression is one of the most common mental illnesses. There are some factors that can increase the risk of developing depression, it has no boundaries. Depression can affect anyone, at any age, and of any race or ethnic group. Depression is a treatable, and early detection and treatment are key for better long-term outcomes.

Signs and Symptom

- Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood
- Dramatic fluctuation in sleeping habits
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling guilty, hopeless, or worthless
- Loss of pleasure and interest in activities once enjoyed

Content References:

<https://mhanational.org/conditions/depression>

<https://nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-Conditions/Depression>

<https://appliedsportpsych.org/resources/mental-wellness-resource-center/>



What student-athletes can do:

- Pay attention to the frequency, intensity, and duration of the symptoms.
- Speak with a trusted health care provider.
- Reach out to a trusted friend, peer, coach, or contact The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255.



What coaches or athletic staff can do:

- Understand and recognize the signs of depression.
- Review and know your institutions or athletic departments mental health resource and referral options.
- Familiarize yourself with on-campus, local and national mental health resources.
- Provide neutral and factual information.



What to say or do if someone you know is struggling:

- I am here for you.
- I'm sorry you are struggling right now.
- You are important.
- Listen without judgement.



FACT SHEET

Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety disorders are among the most common mental illnesses in America. Most people experience feelings of anxiety before an important event such as a big exam, game or presentation. Anxiety disorders, however, are illnesses that cause people to feel frightened, distressed and uneasy for no apparent reason. Understanding anxiety and addressing it can help student-athletes manage it and reduce the impact it has on their overall health and performance.

Signs and Symptom

- Excessive anxiety, worry, or anticipating the worst
- Feeling restless, tired, and irritable
- Difficulty concentrating or losing train of thought
- Difficulty sleeping or insomnia
- Headaches, muscle aches, or upset stomach

Content References:

<https://mhanational.org/conditions/anxiety>

<https://nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-Conditions/Anxiety-Disorders>



What student-athletes can do:

- Pay attention to the frequency, intensity, and duration of the symptoms.
- Identify people in your life that you trust who can provide support and guidance.
- Speak with a trusted health care provider.
- Practice self-care and focus on both physical and mental fitness.



What coaches or athletic staff can do:

- Understand and recognize the signs of anxiety.
- Stay connected and continue to be a resource.
- Review and know your institutions or athletic departments mental health resource and referral options.
- Familiarize yourself with on-campus, local and national mental health resources.
- Practice and model self-care.



What to say or do if someone you know is struggling:

- Your feelings are valid
- There is help if you need it
- You are important
- Listen without judgement



FACT SHEET

Eating Disorders

Eating disorders are real and complex medical and mental health conditions that can have serious consequences for student-athletes health and performance. Individuals struggling with an eating disorder often become obsessed with food, body image, and/or weight. These disorders are serious if not recognized and treated appropriately. Eating disorders are treatable, and early diagnosis and intervention often leads to better long term health outcomes.

Signs and Symptom

- Preoccupation with food, dieting, and weight
- Bing eating and purging behaviors
- Excessive exercising that goes beyond what is safe and healthy for sports performance
- Avoiding mealtimes or eating in front of others

Content References:

<https://mhanational.org/conditions/eating-disorders>

<https://anad.org/eating-disorder-types-and-symptoms/>

<https://nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-Conditions/Eating-Disorders>



What student-athletes can do:

- Identify people in your life that you trust who can provide support and guidance.
- Seek treatment and speak with a trusted health care provider.
- Find an eating disorder peer support group.
- Practice self-care and self-acceptance.



What coaches or athletic staff can do:

- Understand and recognize the signs of eating disorders.
- Encourage your athlete to seek treatment.
- Employ a healthy attitude towards diverse bodies.
- Review and know your institutions or athletic departments mental health resource and referral options.
- Familiarize yourself with on-campus, local and national mental health resources.



What to say or do if someone you know is struggling:

- There is help if you need it
- I'm worried about you
- Have you talked to your health care provider?
- Who else can support you?
- Be supportive of their recovery efforts



FACT SHEET

Risk of Suicide

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. It is the second leading cause of death among people ages 15-24. Understanding the issues concerning suicide and mental health is an important way to take part in suicide prevention, help others in crisis, and change the conversation around suicide.

Warning Signs

- Verbal statements, "you are better off without me"
- Talking about wanting to die
- Talking about feeling hopeless, trapped or having no reason to live
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Withdrawing or isolating themselves
- Extreme mood swings
- Increase use of drugs and alcohol

Content References:

<https://988lifeline.org/how-we-can-all-prevent-suicide/>

<https://mhanational.org/conditions/suicide>

<https://nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Common-with-Mental-Illness/Risk-of-Suicide>



What student-athletes can do:

- Understand and recognize the signs of suicide.
- Call 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline or contact The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255.
- Identify people in your life that you trust who can provide support and guidance.



What coaches or athletic staff can do:

- Understand and recognize the signs of suicide.
- Review and know your institutions or athletic departments mental health resource and referral options.
- Familiarize yourself with on-campus, local, and national suicide resources.
- Read more about postvention guidance: [A Guide for Response to Suicide on College Campuses](#)



What to say or do if someone you know is struggling:

- Talk openly and honestly. Don't be afraid to ask questions like: "Do you have a plan for how you would kill yourself?"
- Express concern "I'm worried about you."
- Do not counsel the person yourself.
- Be patient.
- Call 911 if you are concerned about their immediate safety.

MENTAL HEALTH

Resources

Athletic Department
Mental Health Referral Protocol



On-Campus Resources:



Local/Community Resources:





MENTAL HEALTH

National Resources

Mental Health

Mental Health America

Mental Health America (MHA)'s work is driven by its commitment to promote mental health as a critical part of overall wellness, including prevention services for all; early identification and intervention for those at risk.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

SAMHSA National Helpline

This Helpline provides 24-hour free and confidential treatment referral and information about mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, and recovery. 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

ULifeline

ULifeline is an anonymous, confidential, online resource center, where college students can be comfortable searching for the information they need and want regarding emotional health. ULifeline is a project of The Jed Foundation.

Suicide

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

24-hour, toll-free, confidential support for people in distress. Prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones. Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org.

Jed Foundation

The Jed Foundation (JED) is a nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for our nation's teens and young adults, giving them the skills and support they need to thrive today...and tomorrow.

BIPOC and LGBTQ+

The Trevor Project

If you are a member of the LGBTQ+ community in need of support, The Trevor Project is free and available 24/7 to provide you with call, chat, or text support. Their website also offers a free variety of resources on topics such as gender identity, mental health, community, and more. Text 678-678 or Call 1-866-488-7386.

Inclusive Therapists

Inclusive Therapists offers a safer, simpler way to find a culturally responsive LGBTQ+ affirming, social justice-oriented therapist. They center around the needs of Black, Indigenous, People of Color, members of the QTBIPOC community, Neurodivergent individuals and those who are disabled. They offer various forms of therapy, as well as reduced fee therapy and low-cost/non-profit services.

Aakoma Project

If you are a young adult in the BIPOC community who is in need of mental health resources, the Aakoma Project offers workshops, personal therapy, videos, toolkits, and articles designed to help.

Melanin & Mental Health

This website provides the members of the Black community with a myriad of free mental health resources including podcasts, book recommendations, mental health influencers to follow, and more. It also can direct you to a therapist in your local area and offers free in between sessions guidance.

Student-Athlete Focused

The Courage First Athlete

Specialized sports crisis counselors are available to chat Monday- Friday from 12 pm - 8 pm PST for athletes, coaches, parents, and anyone in the athletic community who is experiencing emotional, physical, or sexual abuse. Helpline Call or text 888-279-1026

Hilinski's Hope

Hilinski's Hope Foundation is a non-profit organization formed to promote awareness and education of mental health and wellness for student athletes. They have a six-lesson course, designed to help reduce the stigma of seeking help for mental health concerns (\$6.00 a student).