

INFORMATION SHEET FOR COACHES

How to detect:

Observe weight loss or gain - A change in the appearance of Body parts
Over obsession with weight loss/changes in behavior
Mood swings/anxiety/depression
Social changes/isolation - withdrawal, avoidance of activities where food may be present
Change in performance
Self-mutilating behaviors
Lack of energy
Apathy
Periods of transition/family, relationships
Absence
Fainting/dizziness/weakness/cramping
Easily injured
Bruising
A lot of soreness
Change in academic performance
Concern/comments from friends & teammates
Unusual eating patterns/unhealthy attitude toward foods
Questioning regarding nutrition – How, when, what you are eating
Over exercising/anxiety regarding exercise & performance
Feeling excessively guilty after a missed training
Skin/teeth/hair changes
Panic/anxiety
Isolation
Fatigue
Defensive over routine/Anger when exercise routine is interrupted
Frequent trips to bathroom
Overload of activities
Eating in secret
Hoarding or stealing food
Perfectionist or high-achieving personality
Low self-esteem

What to do – Say

- **Preseason**

- Post literature in locker room regarding nutrition
- Focus on proper eating habits – not physical # of weight
- Choose words carefully – Non judgmental words/non-triggering words
- Overall nutrition – Thinking of Food as Fuel for the Body
- Examples of proper nutrition (packets)
- Do not make certain foods off limits or label foods as "bad"
- Make it clear that any food is ok in moderation
- Make them aware of snack choices that promote healthy bodies and increased energy
- Parental involvement

Physicals (any pertinent info to add to physical form)

Perform physicals in a manner that is sensitive to any existing eating disorder or body image concerns

Be informed about tests to be performed in physicals (i.e. checking electrolytes, etc...)

Preseason meeting w/family & parents where eating disorders are addressed – inform parents of telltale signs of eating disorders

Put policy in place ahead of time for what will take place if a student develops an eating disorder

- **Season**

As a coach, be a good example by modeling healthy eating habits, exercise habits and perceptions of your own body

Friday practice plan, mention eat, sleep, good habits

Day to Day re-emphasis on hydration & nutrition

Emphasize good nutritional habits before/after competition

If there is a problem, Address athlete individually

Go to nurse for reassessment

- Do not focus on weight or behaviors, focus on emotions & changes in mood/attitude/change of circumstances
- Be wary of increase in stress
- Make it clear that you are there to talk when they need to
- Do not label them or judge them

Discuss problem w/guidance and decide who will speak to parent

Inform chain of command for referral (psychologist, guidance counselor)

Evaluate if athlete can stay on team

“Booster” group to take turns bringing healthy snacks – maybe even “buddy system”

Provide anonymous method of reporting concerns

- **Post Season**

One-on-One meetings – goals for next season

Tell athletes to take some time off from training

Rest & Heal, off season training may require a change in caloric intake but talk about this in the context of energy expenditure, not being restrictive

Cross-Train, Active rest

Follow-up with student post season

Focus on continued healthy eating & taking care of themselves

Handout on “winding down” from the season

Use something like email to keep nutrition and healthy body image on their minds – maintain contact

Have captains check in on the others – even if just getting them to tell others to check email

Bring students to conferences – upper classmen/captains – get message to them

Push for better role models – Pro-athletes