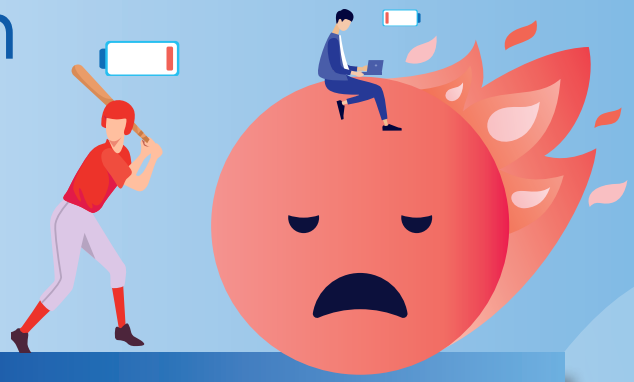
Learning About **Athlete Burnout** & Mental Health



Signs to Recognize

- Trouble concentrating, remembering or thinking clearly
- Eating too much or having little appetite
- Unable to finish tasks
- Excessive worry
- Sad, empty, hopeless or worthless feelings
- Sensitivity to sights, sounds, smells and touch
- Feeling irritable and restless
- Losing interest in once-enjoyed activities
- Feeling cut off or withdrawn from others
- Changed sleep: trouble sleeping, too much sleep, or daytime sleep and staying awake at night
- Shifts in energy

A mix of symptoms that persists over two weeks may signal a mental health condition.

Signs and symptoms needing immediate attention

- Thoughts/plans to hurt or kill yourself or others
- Hearing voices or seeing things others cannot hear or see
- Unexplained shifts in thought, speech or writing
- Excessive fear or suspicion
- Sharp decline at school or work
- Sudden personality changes that seem odd or out of character

Athlete Burnout

Athlete burnout is a syndrome from ongoing training and sport-related stress, leading to staleness, overtraining and eventual burnout. Many athletes feel trapped by the conditions of taking part in sports.

Burnout signs and symptoms:

- Performance or fitness plateaus or declines, with less strength and stamina and persistent fatigue
- Physical signs, such as increased resting heart rate and blood pressure
- Trouble focusing, poorer schoolwork or forgetfulness
- Illness from a weakened immune system
- Emotional changes, such as disinterest, moodiness or irritability
- Low self-esteem; more anxiety and depression from falling short of sport demands

Best burnout prevention and treatment:

Rest and a break from sports

If someone you know needs urgent crisis support, **call or text 988** or visit a local emergency room.

Get Support

Support is available from many sources:

- Your primary care doctor
- Nearby mental health centers
- Workplace assistance programs
- Your local Mental Health America affiliate
- Churches or places of worship



Sources: Mental Health America; National Athletic Trainers' Association
Infographic from the National Athletic Trainers' Association (Revised 2023)