

Female Athlete Triad: How Much Is Known

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Abstract : Females' participation in athletic sports events has increased in the last decades, and the discovery of eating disorders and menstrual dysfunction has been evident since the early 1980s. The term "Female athlete triad" was initially defined by the Task Force on Women's Issues of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) in 1992. Menstrual irregularities have been prevalent in competitive female athletes, especially in their adolescence and early adulthood age. Nutritional restrictions to maintain a certain physique and lean look are sought to be advantageous in female athletes such as gymnastics, cheerleading, or weight-sensitive sports such as endurance sports (cycling and marathoners). This stress places the female at risk of irregularities in their menstrual cycle which can lead them to lose their circadian estrogen levels. Estrogen is an important female reproductive hormone that plays a role in maintaining bone mass. Bone mineral density peaks by the age 25. Inadequate estrogen due to missed menstrual cycle or amenorrhea has been estimated to cause a yearly loss of 2% of bone mass, increasing the risk of osteoporosis in the postmenopausal phase. This paper is intended to have a better depth understanding of whether female athletes are being monitored by their official entities or coaches. A qualitative research method through online search engines and keywords "females, athletes, triad, amenorrhea, anorexia, osteoporosis" were used to collect the available primary sources from official public library databases. The latest consensus was published in 2014 by the Female Athlete Triad Coalition and the need for further research and emphasis on this issue is still lacking.

Keywords : female, athlete, triad, amenorrhea, anorexia, bone loss

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