

Prevalence of Risk Factors of the Female Athlete Triad Among Young Elite Athletes of the World

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Abstract : Background: Inattentive food choices and engagement in excessive physical activities by male athletes can potentially lead to adverse health consequences. Objective: The aim was to ascertain the occurrence of risk factors associated with the Male Athlete Triad among young elite athletes in Pakistan. Methodology: In 2018, a cross-sectional study based on questionnaires was conducted at the Pakistan Sports Board. The study aimed to explore the risk factors related to the Male Athlete Triad in young elite athletes who were part of national training camps in major metropolitan areas. The study included proficient male elite athletes aged 18 to 25 years, capable of understanding the English questionnaire. The athletes completed a survey encompassing aspects like demographic information, educational background, Body Mass Index (BMI), sports involvement, and hours of participation. Additionally, they filled out the Eating Attitude Test-26 (EAT-26) and questionnaires assessing risks of amenorrhea and low bone mineral density. The prevalence of risk factors for each of the three components was individually evaluated. The collected data underwent analysis using SPSS-20, with descriptive statistics being applied. Results: The study comprised a sample of 90 elite athletes (mean age: 23.57 ± 2.37 years, mean BMI: 21.97 ± 1.90) engaged in various sports. The EAT-26 results indicated that 50% of athletes were at risk of developing an eating disorder. Moreover, 83.3% exhibited disordered eating behaviors that necessitated referral. Risks for amenorrhea were observed in 15% of the participants, and regarding low bone mineral density, notable risks were absent except for the consumption of caffeinated beverages, which was noted in 51.7% of participants. Conclusion: The study identified a significant prevalence of disordered eating risk among male elite athletes in Pakistan. However, the risks associated with amenorrhea and low bone mineral density were not a major concern in this particular group.

Keywords : Pakistan, osteoporosis, female athlete triad, bone mineral density, athlete, amenorrhea, eating disorders

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