



VOLLEYBALLBC

## INFO SHEET

# MENTAL HEALTH LINKS TO ATHLETE BURNOUT

### GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCERN

- Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering things
- Feeling disconnected and withdrawn from others
- Changes in appetite (loss of appetite or overeating)
- Increased irritability and frustration
- Changes in energy level and sleep patterns and quality (for example, up at night and sleepy during the day)
- Feeling sad, worthless, empty or without hope
- Light, sound, touch and smell sensitivity

### URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

- Suicidal thoughts or planning
- Unexplained changes in speech, writing or thinking
- Feeling of paranoia or deep fear
- Significant drop in school, sport or work performance
- Light, sound, touch and smell sensitivity
- Sudden and/or strange personality changes

### WHAT IS ATHLETE BURNOUT?

Athlete burnout is a cognitive-affective syndrome characterized by: (1) perceptions of emotional and physical exhaustion, (2) reduced sense of accomplishment, and (3) devaluation of sport.

### SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF ATHLETE BURNOUT

- Physical signs such as higher resting heart rate & blood pressure
- Plateaued or reduced performance or conditioning; loss of strength and stamina
- Chronic feelings of fatigue or "feeling exhausted"
- Mental challenges such as difficulties paying attention, performing in school tasks, or remembering things
- Frequent illnesses (weakened immune system response)
- Volatile emotions (irritability, mood swings, feeling "flat")
- Negative sense of self; increased depression and anxiety over not meeting sport demands

Sources

NCAA, NATA, Eklund & Defreese, 2017



# PREVENT AND TREAT BURNOUT

Athletes often juggle busy lives and outside pressures, including school and other pursuits. In addition, many programs may be unknowingly over-training athletes - particularly if they are unaware of the volume of training an athlete is doing in or outside volleyball.

Research shows that the best immediate treatment for athlete burnout is:

- **ADEQUATE REST AND RECOVERY TIME**
- **SOME TIME AWAY FROM SPORT**

## WHERE TO SEEK HELP IF YOU SUSPECT ATHLETE BURNOUT

- Family doctors can help athletes manage burnout, particularly if they have experience in sport.
- Mental health service providers with a background in sport (counsellors, psychologists, mental performance consultants) can support athletes and help create a treatment plan.
- Supportive coaches, team leaders, athletic trainers (physios, athletic therapists) can also refer athletes for help.

## FOR AN IMMEDIATE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

- Call the BC Crisis Centre at 1-800-784-2433
- Go to the nearest Emergency Room or call 911



Sources

NCAA, NATA, Eklund & Defreese, 2017



**LEADING IN SAFE SPORT PRACTICES & FOSTERING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

Visit [www.volleyballbc.org/safe-sport](http://www.volleyballbc.org/safe-sport) for more information about what we are doing to address concussion, injury, abuse and maltreatment, and mental health in volleyball.