

The Female Athlete Triad in High-Level Female Collegiate Athletes

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Exercise is very beneficial for people of all ages and can promote bone growth and development and overall health, but when individuals overexert themselves, exercise can become detrimental. Women in particular are at higher risk due to a syndrome called The Female Athlete Triad. The Triad is the interrelationships between three components: low energy availability (EA), menstrual dysfunction (MD), and low bone mineral density (BMD).

Previous research includes analyses on how the Triad affects an athlete's performance or their daily lives. Many studies also analyze how to diagnose this syndrome. These studies have mainly researched the effect of the Triad on the elite athletes and found that many of these athletes show signs of the syndrome.

The goal of this research is to compare the risk of symptoms of the Triad in elite (NCAA) athletes and recreational (club) athletes. A survey was given to the participants and their responses will be analyzed and compared across the two different populations to determine whether or not NCAA athletes have a higher prevalence of the Female Athlete Triad compared to their recreational counterparts.

In the data analysis, it was discovered that the NCAA athletes do not exhibit more symptoms of the Triad and the analysis pointed towards recreational athletes having a higher prevalence of Triad symptoms. This indicates that in addition to NCAA athletes, recreational athletes should be screened and educated on the Triad to benefit their overall health.