

DEPRESSION

Signs to look for:

- A low/depressed mood most of the day
- Negative self-talk
- Loss of enjoyment and interest in activities such as sport
- Lack of energy and tiredness
- Not hanging out with team friends/isolation
- Missing classes/grades dropping
- Missing at academic center/dining hall
- Increased Alcohol/Drug use
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions in practice/competition
- Agitated or anxious
- Having sleeping difficulties or sometimes sleeping too much
- Changes in eating habits may lead to either loss of weight or putting on weight.
- Thinking about death a lot or of suicide

Other Risk Factors for Athletes

- Lack of social support outside sport
- Injuries – Chronic, season or career ending)
- Perception of failure (academics, time mgt., sport)
- Underperformance/bench
- Overtraining/lack of progression
- Career transitions (Freshman, Seniors)

What you can do:

- Pull the athlete aside privately, tell them you are concerned and have noticed “specific behaviors”.
- Encourage them to talk and let them know about available services
- Ask them what they need- a mental health day, silent support, a routine check in, etc
- Treat them with respect and resist the urge to try to cure or solve their problems. Just listen.
- Depression is an illness, don’t tell the person to “get over it” or “cheer up”. Let them know that there is help and the way they are feeling isn’t permanent.
- Let them know they are important and a valued member of the team
- Don’t assume someone is or is not depressed. Depression can look like smiles and high achievement.
- Encourage the person to seek the available services and help them access them.
- If there is a risk of harm to the person or others, call emergency services or the mental health crisis team.

Mental Health and Performance Line: 803-777-5882

Emergency: 911