

# ANXIETY

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## Signs to look for:

Anxiety disorder symptoms can vary. They may include:

- Persistent worrying or anxiety about several areas that are out of proportion: Sport, Academics, Relationships
- Overthinking plans and solutions to all possible worst-case outcomes
- Perceiving situations and events as threatening, even when they aren't
- Difficulty handling uncertainty
- Indecisiveness and fear of making the wrong decision
- Inability to set aside or let go of a worry
- Inability to relax, feeling restless, and feeling keyed up or on edge
- Difficulty concentrating, or the feeling that your mind "goes blank"
- Excessive sport/game preparation and over training.

Physical signs and symptoms may include:

- Fatigue & Irritability or difficulty keeping up with workouts
- Trouble sleeping
- Muscle tension or muscle aches
- Trembling, feeling twitchy, nervousness or being easily startled
- Sweating excessively
- Gastrointestinal issues

## Athletic risk considerations

- Failure to successfully compete
- Athletic Pressure – not living up to performance expectations (Athletic, school, social)
- Psychosocial Stressors – family, relationships, cultural issues
- Negative Perfectionism - excessively high standards, overly self-critical (negative self-talk, self-blame, and rumination), and seeking approval of coaches, parents, and peers. Exaggerated expectations, have a high fear of failure, have difficulty coping with challenging situations.

## 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, help them access services.
- Be prepared for a full range of reactions, especially with negative perfectionism. This may feel like a failure to them.
- Treat them with respect and resist the urge to try to cure or solve their problems. Just listen.
- Anxiety is an illness, don't tell the person to “calm down” or “just chill”. 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
- If there is a risk of harm to the person or others, call emergency services and the Mental Health and Performance team.

**Mental Health and Performance Line: 803-777-5882**

**Emergency: 911**