

US T&F and XC Coaches Association
DIII Track & Field Executive Committee
Working Group on REDs & Disordered Eating



Coaches:

We know that proper fueling is important to an athlete's success, but there has been a recent and welcome uptick in awareness of the negative effects of underfueling on performance, health, and well-being. In 2025, Emily Infeld won her first ever US track title at 35 years old. She said on Instagram, "I've learned a lot this last decade and am way more conscious of recovery and fueling... I'm eating more than ever this year and that's what I need to be at my best." More professional runners than ever before are speaking up about this critical aspect of their training.

You may have heard of the Female Athlete Triad - the combination of amenorrhea, disordered eating, and osteoporosis. Now we are aware that there are negative health and performance effects for people of any gender. REDs, or Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport, is a broader term that addresses the additional themes of low energy availability, underfueling, and overtraining.

Over the past 15 years, more attention has been given to eating pathology in sports. During this time, research has shown that athletes participating in track and cross country have significantly higher rates of disordered eating than most other sport types (1). Studies have shown that up to 84% of collegiate athletes report engaging in maladaptive eating and weight control behaviors (2).

Our athletes already rely on us to help them reach their potential on the track. As coaches, we have an opportunity to help them connect the dots between healthy fueling and performance. We also have a responsibility to work to protect them from unhealthy behaviors that endanger their physical and mental health.

We have curated a list of resources that we hope you will use to educate yourselves and your student-athletes on this important topic. There are also tips on how to spot athletes who are struggling with REDs, disordered eating, or eating disorders, and suggestions on how to refer these students to appropriate professionals if they are struggling.

Awareness is prevention. We hope these materials will set you and your teams up for success!

Signed,
The Committee on REDs, USTFCCCA



Letter from Eating Disorder Professionals:

Over the past decade, studies have confirmed that athletes can find themselves at higher risk for disordered eating and eating disorders due to the high expectations placed on their bodies and minds as a result of their sport. Eating disorders themselves are both serious and common mental health disorders that affect up to 9% of the general population (1). Athletes show up at an increased risk; estimates suggest that up to 45% of female athletes and 19% of male athletes struggle with eating disorders. This heightened vulnerability is fueled by both internal and external pressures to meet physical standards and excel in competition (2).

Athletes frequently experience negative complications from disordered habits like restrictive dieting and over-training. While it can be difficult for an athlete to step away from their sport to pursue treatment for an eating disorder, that treatment not only increases their likelihood of safely returning, but also provides potentially *lifesaving* intervention (3). The reality that **eating disorders carry the highest mortality rate of any mental health condition** only further increases the urgency to address this important issue.

The good news is that evidence has proven that team culture can help prevent these negative complications. Coaches and trainers play an important role in encouraging healthy fueling practices and self-care techniques. They can also provide key protective factors regarding eating disorders prevention, screening, and support.

We hope this resource list will serve as an introductory course for coaches and trainers to educate themselves on the important topics of healthy fueling, REDs, eating disorders and self-care so that they can create a stronger, more supportive culture for their athletes (4).

Signed,
Athlete EDGE at EDCare
The Performance Collective

Free Resources

What is RED-S?

				
Project RED-S Video: What is REDs? - here	Stanford FASTR Project Educational Vid Series - here	RED-S for College Athletes - Video Series	ANAD - Eating Disorders in Athletes	Orthorexia Nervosa Info Sheet

Tools for Athletes + Coaches

				
“Fueling with a Purpose” Fact Sheet	Nutrition and Hydration Guide for Female Athletes	UMichigan Health - Sports Nutrition Video	NEDA - Coaches & Trainers Toolkit	Breaking the Silence Discussion Guide

Tools for Athletic Trainers:

				
IOC REDs Clinical Assessment Tool Version 2	Safe Exercise at Every Stage Guidelines - here & here	National ATs’ Position Statement - EDs in Athletes	Screening / Assessment Tools	More Research

Additional Resources

Resources and Research for Athletic Trainers:

- Dr. Paula Quatromoni's Presentation - School Athletes & Eating Disorders - [here](#)
- Masterclass - a REDs informed Provider Certification Program - [here](#)
- Research: Clinical Utility of ED Screening Tools in Young Athletes - [here](#)
- Research: Nutritional Counseling in Athletes - [here](#)
- Research: Nutrition Knowledge of Adolescent SA's - [here](#)
- Research: Peer Interventions - [here](#)

Books:

- "Good for a Girl: A Woman Running in a Man's World" by Lauren Fleshman - [here](#)
- "Nancy Clark's Sports Nutrition Guidebook" - Amazon Link - [here](#)
- "Finding your Sweet Spot: How to Avoid REDs by Optimizing your Energy" - [here](#)

For Athletes who are Struggling:

- Lane 9 Women's Sport & Health Directory - [here](#)
- AthleatMD Medical & Nutrition Support for Athletes - [here](#)
- Athlete EDGE® at EDCare - [here](#)
- AASP Eating Disorders Resource List - [here](#)
- Mind Body Endurance - [here](#)
- McCullum Place (Residential) - [here](#)
- The Within University ("The Within University is a safe place for students to recover from their eating disorders while continuing their education and everyday life. They provide higher levels of care for students, including IOP+ and PHP+, and involve families and loved ones every step of the way.") - [here](#)