

THE FEMALE ATHLETE TRIAD-WHAT EVERY PHYSICAL THERAPIST SHOULD KNOW

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ABSTRACT

Females participating in sports have the potential of developing one or multiple parts of the Female Athlete Triad, defined as the inter-relationship among energy availability, menstrual function, and bone mineral density. Energy availability, defined as dietary energy intake minus exercise energy expended, is believed to be at the cornerstone of the triad, and complications from low energy availability span many of the bodily systems and can have psychological implications. Treatment of the triad requires a comprehensive multi-disciplinary approach.

Physical therapists frequently treat injured athletes and may have prolonged interactions with athletes depending on the length of the rehabilitation process. In addition to examination, assessment, and treatment of injuries, the role of the physical therapist includes prevention, and the promotion of health, wellness, and fitness. Thus, the goal of this clinical commentary is to identify and describe essential knowledge for the physical therapist, clearly identify the role of the physical therapist as part of multi-disciplinary management team, and outline resources for the physical therapist and athletes relevant to the female athlete triad.

Level of Evidence: 5

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