Eating Disorders

Some individuals become so preoccupied with food and weight issues that they find it difficult to focus on other aspects of their life. It is important for student-athletes to seek balance in their relationship with food, as this impacts all aspects of physical and mental health.

**Signs and symptoms:**
- Obsession with food and exercise.
- Denying self of food to the point of starvation.
- Binge eating and purging behaviors.
- Compulsive exercise beyond what is good for sport performance and health.
- Social withdrawal.
- Fear of eating in public.

**What student-athletes can do:**
- Accept yourself. It is important to understand that the ‘ideal’ body weight of each individual differs because of variations in genetic traits and cultural norms.
- Find support with others recovering from an eating disorder.

**What athletics department staff can do:**
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of eating disorders.
- Partner with campus health care providers such as sports dieticians, eating disorder specialists and licensed mental health providers to support healthy eating and the prevention and treatment of eating disorders.

**What everyone can do:**
- Learn more about eating disorders at the National Eating Disorder Association, nationaleatingdisorders.org, and at the National Association for Males with Eating Disorders, namedinc.org.

*Content courtesy of NAMI.*