

WOMENS MENTAL HEALTH

What is Trauma



Definition: Trauma is when an event or series of events causes lasting emotional or physical harm



Can occur through witnessing an event, hearing of an event, learning that someone you care about was involved in an event, and hearing details firsthand.



Two types of trauma:

1. **Acute trauma:** a single stressful event
2. **Chronic trauma:** repeated or prolonged events

Risk Factors: Gender Differences and ACE Scores:



- Women are less likely to face severe trauma but are twice as likely as men to develop traumatic symptoms or PTSD afterward.
- High ACE (adverse childhood experience) scores, particularly of 3 or more, increase the risk of mental health issues.

Social Support



- Loneliness can worsen mental health and shorten lifespan
- Encourage athletes to prioritize mental health and communicate openly with healthcare providers.
- Important for surrounding people to be forward rather than tiptoeing around hard conversations - **Ask: Have you experienced trauma? What kind? What symptoms?**

How Trauma Affects the Body



General Symptoms:

- **Emotional:** Nightmares, flashbacks.
- **Physical:** Pain, fatigue, headaches, rapid heartbeat, breathing changes.

Specific Systems Affected:

- **Nervous System:** Can be overly active or shut down.
- **Respiratory & Circulatory Systems:** Changes in breathing, blood pressure.
- **Endocrine System:** Alters stress hormone levels.
- **Immune System:** Reduced ability to fight illness.
- **Musculoskeletal System:** Increased muscle tension.



Takeway

Both physical and mental health are crucial for performance and well being

Coping and Treatment

Techniques

- **Breath Work:** Helps with emotional and physical well-being.
- **Therapies:** CBT, DBT, EMDR, and ACT (acceptance and commitment therapy).
- **Grounding:** Focus on what you can see, feel, hear, smell, and taste.

Grounding techniques

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can feel
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Self-Help:

- • Use books, podcasts, ted talks, and videos to support mental health.
- • Start with one method to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

Medication:

- • SSRIs are common for depression and anxiety. Discuss side effects with your doctor.
- • Be aware of signs - - Anxiety often times physical manifests are increased heart rate