




## INJURY & DEPRESSION

HELPING ATHLETES THROUGH  
THE ROUGH DAYS

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MATA Conference 

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## OUR SERVICES


We aim to help athletes achieve their highest academic, athletic, and personal aspirations. Our providers understand that peak performance falls on the continuum of mental health and well-being.



Performance Restoration

Mental Health Concerns  
(depression, anxiety, trauma,  
etc.)

Normal/Average Life  
Functioning  
(relationships, roommate  
issues, transitioning to  
college, etc.)



Performance Optimization

Peak Performance  
(mental edge, confidence,  
focus, leadership, etc.)




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## OBJECTIVES


- ✓ Depression fundamentals
- ✓ Ripple effect of injury
- ✓ “Mental Rehab”
- ✓ Return To Play



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## Mental Health Prevalence

What % of people have a mental health disorder?




The graphic features a brain silhouette filled with the text "LET'S TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH". "LET'S TALK" is at the top, "ABOUT" is in the middle, "MENTAL" is in large red letters at the bottom, and "HEALTH" is at the very bottom. To the right of the brain are two logos: a mountain range and the MATA logo.

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## Mental Health Prevalence

What % of people have a mental health disorder?

**1 out of every 4/5**



The graphic features a brain silhouette filled with the text "LET'S TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH". "LET'S TALK" is at the top, "ABOUT" is in the middle, "MENTAL" is in large red letters at the bottom, and "HEALTH" is at the very bottom. To the right of the brain are two logos: a mountain range and the MATA logo.

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## Mental Health Prevalence

What % of people have a mental health disorder?

1 out of every 4/5

5/5 have mental health





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## MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM


| ■<br>IN CRISIS  | ■ ■<br>STRUGGLING  | ■ ■ ■<br>SURVIVING  | ■ ■ ■ ■<br>THRIVING  | ■ ■ ■ ■ ■<br>EXCELLING   |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| Very anxious<br>Very low mood<br>Absenteeism<br>Exhausted<br>Very poor sleep<br>Weight loss | Anxious<br>Depressed<br>Tired<br>Poor performance<br>Poor sleep<br>Poor appetite | Worried<br>Nervous<br>Irritable<br>Sad<br>Trouble sleeping<br>Distracted<br>Withdrawn | Positive<br>Calm<br>Performing<br>Sleeping well<br>Eating normally<br>Normal social activity | Cheerful<br>Joyful<br>Energetic<br>High performance<br>Flow<br>Fully realising potential |



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## DEPRESSION SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>LOSS OF PLEASURE</b></p> <p>Loss of interest in activities or others that used to be enjoyable. Often social isolation can occur with low motivation.</p> | <p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>SADNESS</b></p> <p>Feeling tearful, crying or "empty." Sometimes can be flat affect or feeling unable to cry when sad.</p>              | <p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>COGNITIVE SIGNS</b></p> <p>Inappropriate guilt. Self-criticalness. Difficulties concentrating. Low self-worth, inadequacy. Indecisiveness.</p>                     | <p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>PHYSICAL PROBLEMS</b></p> <p>Changes in appetite. Low libido. Weight gain/loss. Agitation/Restlessness. Headache/stomach ache.</p> |
| <p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>IRRITABILITY</b></p> <p>Feeling short-fused, irritable with others and "not myself."</p>  | <p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE</b></p> <p>Recurrent thoughts of death or dying, wanting to escape the "pain" or feeling hopeless and helpless.</p> | <p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>SLEEP DISRUPTION</b></p> <p>Difficulties falling asleep; waking up not feeling rested. Sleeping excessively or rising early &amp; unable to get back to sleep.</p> | <p><b>8</b></p> <p><b>LOSS OF ENERGY</b></p> <p>Feeling tired; fatigued; difficulty getting out of bed; lethargy.</p>                                    |



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# ATHLETE IDENTITY


## ATHLETE IDENTITY

"If I am not an athlete, who am I?"

Ways to maintain athlete identity

- Treat rehab as a form of athletic performance
- Stay involved in sport
  - Beyond just filling up water bottles: focus on tactics, nuances of technique, creating mental maps, mindset training, etc.
- Redirect needs to other athletic areas, such as weight training, nutrition, time management, etc.





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# STAGES OF GRIEF

**Denial:** May minimize the severity of the injury

- PTs should reiterate diagnosis, treatment plan, and meaning behind it. Be conservative with timelines!

**Anger:** When reality hits.

- Can be directed toward coaches, ATs, PTs, athletes, or self.
- PTs should listen to athletes, display empathy, and normalize their patient's reactions.

**Bargaining:** Trying to make a deal & trying to find a way out.

- Often occurs with parents, coaches, or medical staff. "If you let me play, I will..."
- PTs should trust their training & be transparent with concerns.

**Depression/Fear:** Final realization of the inevitable.

- Mental health is most fragile at this stage.
- PTs should listen to athletes, encourage them, & express confidence in the recovery process.

**Acceptance:** Finding the way forward and finding new motivation.





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## RED FLAGS TIME FOR A REFERRAL

- Unreasonable or intense fear of reinjury or return to sport
- Continued denial of injury severity and response to recovery
- General impatience and irritability
- Rapid mood swings
- Withdrawal from team, parents, and/or significant others
- Extreme guilt about letting the team down
- Dwelling on minor physical complaints
- New somatic complaints unrelated to the original illness or injury
- Obsession with the question of RTP
- Appear hopeless, crying, negative, overly self-critical, doubting self, lacking confidence
- Excessive worrying, anxious, obsession, perfectionistic



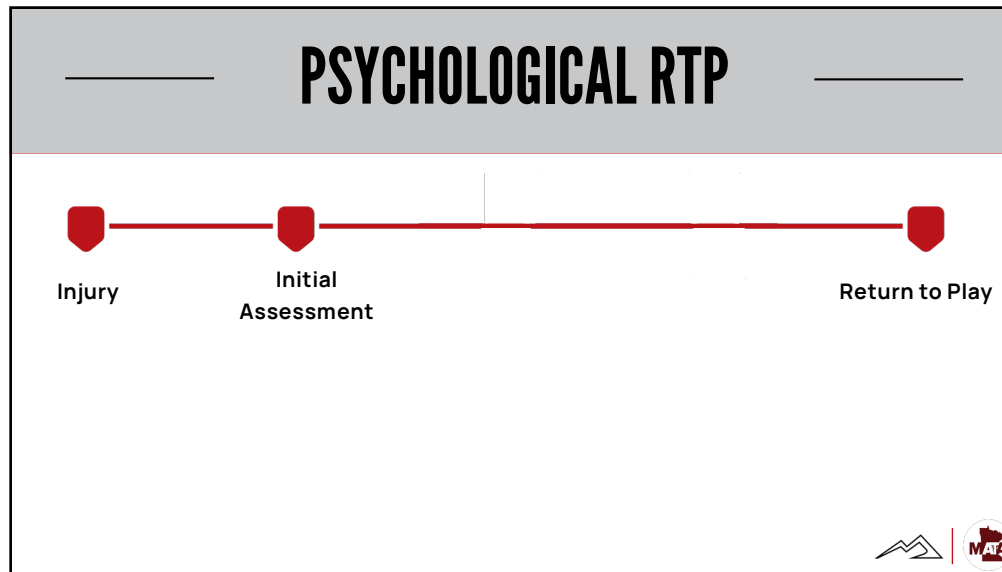
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## MAKING A REFERRAL

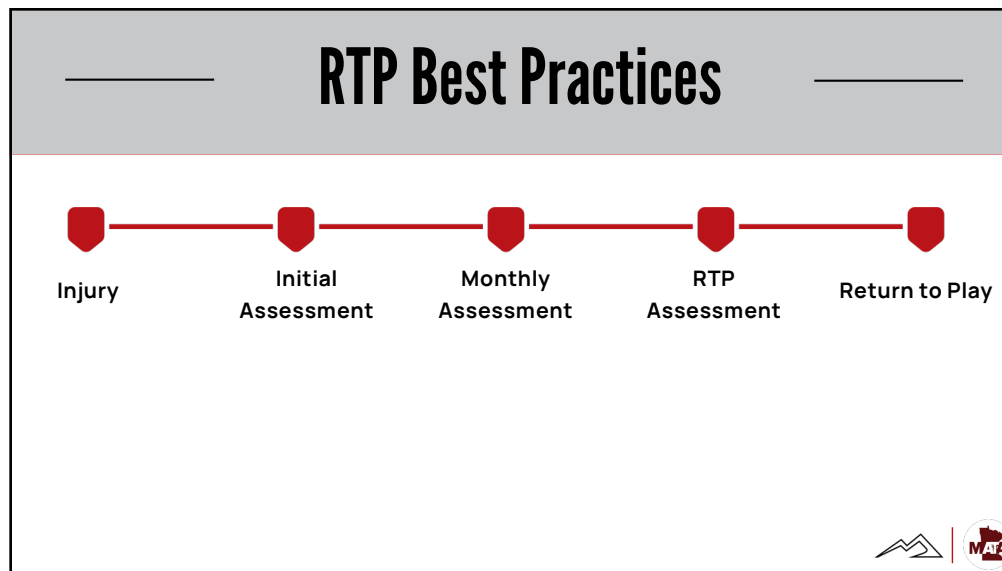
- Let your athlete know you care and you want them to get the most out of their recovery process
- Share what you've noticed in your athlete that suggests they may benefit from sport psych (e.g., being really hard on themselves, experiencing more fatigue or pain than expected, having a hard time getting exercises in)
- Ask them if they've ever heard of sport psychology. Listen to their response, and ask them whether they'd ever consider going.
- Normalize it! Let them know that many athletes use sport psychology, including professionals.
- Offer to provide a direct referral and to speak with the sport psychologist so they don't feel they need to share their entire story over again (after getting a ROI)



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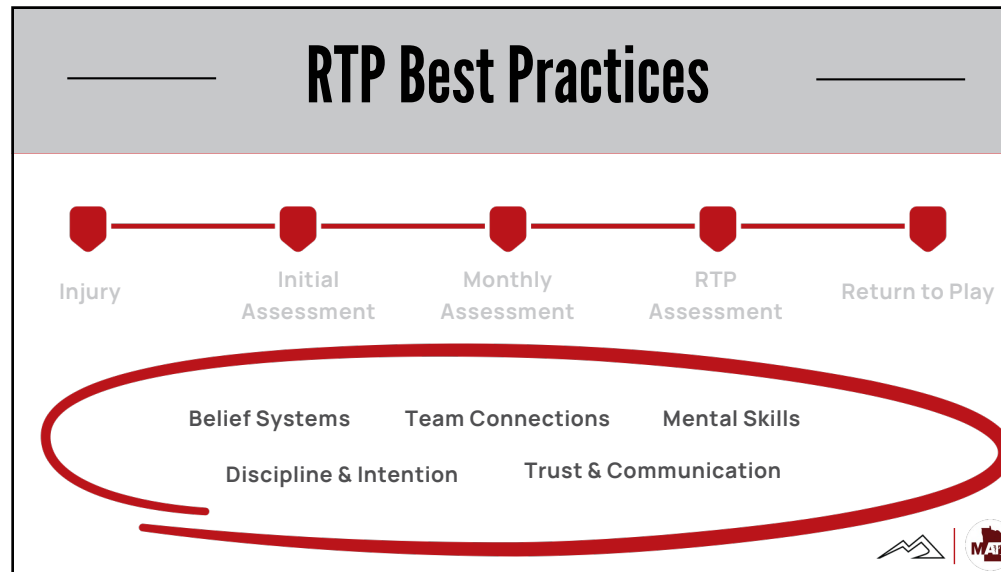


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# THANK YOU!

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