

## **DISORDERED EATING AND COMPULSIVE EXERCISE BEHAVIORS: ASSOCIATIONS WITH QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG ADOLESCENT ATHLETES**

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**Background:** The prevalence of disordered eating (DE) and compulsive exercise (CE) behaviors is higher among adolescent athletes compared to their non-athlete peers. DE behaviors are related to lower quality of life (QoL) in adolescents, but the association between DE, CE and QoL is not well understood in adolescent athletes.

**Objective:** The primary aim was to examine the association between DE and CE behaviors with QoL measures among uninjured adolescent athletes. We hypothesized that participants with increased DE and CE would report lower QoL.

**Methods:** Participants completed Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q), Compulsive Exercise Test (CET) and Pediatric QoL Inventory (PedsQL). Pearson's correlation coefficients were used to assess relationships of PedsQL with EDE-Q and CET (global and subscale) scores.

**Results:** 24 athletes (mean age 15.5 +/- 1.4, 79% female) participated in the study. There was a strong and significant inverse correlation between EDE-Q and PedsQL scores ( $r=-0.65$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). No correlation was found between CET global and PedsQL scores. There were low and significant correlations between PedsQL and CET subscales measuring lack of exercise enjoyment ( $r=-0.42$ ,  $p=0.04$ ) and exercise rigidity ( $r=0.46$ ,  $p=0.02$ ). No correlation was noted between PedsQL and avoidance/rule-driven behavior, weight-control, or mood improvement subscales.

**Conclusion:** In our sample of adolescent athletes, there was a significant relationship between DE behaviors and QoL. The relationship between CE and QoL remains unclear.