



SmartHealth Handbook

A resource to support
female player health
and development.

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**NETBALL
NEW ZEALAND**
POI TARAWHITI AOTEAROA

Introducing SmartHealth

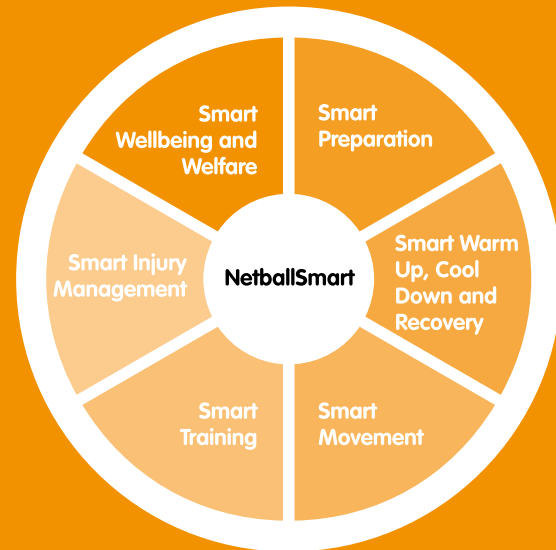
The NetballSmart framework is based on six key principles; Smart Preparation, Smart Warm Up, Cool Down and Recovery, Smart Movement, Smart Training, Smart Injury Management and Smart Wellbeing and Welfare.

SmartHealth is a NEW resource designed to understand and support female player health and development within New Zealand Netball and is part of the Smart Wellbeing and Welfare principle.

SmartHealth aims to provide education for players, coaches, support staff and whānau, to better understand female player health, empower the female player to manage their own health, and how to recognise signs in players who may need support.

Key focus areas will be; changes throughout puberty and adolescence, the role of the menstrual cycle for health, the importance of nutrition and recovery and practical advice on supporting player health and performance.

[Click here for more information: NetballSmart 6 Principles](#)



SmartHealth Objectives

The SmartHealth resource is aimed at players, whānau, coaches and support staff working in community Netball in Aotearoa New Zealand.

SmartHealth aims to support female player health throughout adolescence and early adulthood by;

- Educating on what defines a healthy female player.
- Growing knowledge and understanding of female player development throughout puberty and adolescence.
- Educating on the importance of the menstrual cycle for health and performance.
- Growing knowledge and understanding around nutrition and recovery to support the FULL energy requirements of female players.
- Provide education and practical tips which reduce time lost to Netball from health-related injury, illness, fatigue and under-recovery.
- Giving practical off-court tips to support optimal female physical and mental health, resulting in on-court performance.
- Providing resources to identify at risk athletes and to support those requiring further assistance.
- Empowering the female player to manage their own health.



A Healthy Player is one who:



BALANCES TRAINING (OFTEN IN MULTIPLE SPORTS) WITH RECOVERY

Look at the player's total weekly schedule and ensure there is sufficient time to adapt and recover. Allow at least one day of rest from all sport per week.



ENSURES SLEEP IS A PRIORITY

8+ hours sleep per night reduces injury risk in adolescent players.



SUPPORTS TRAINING WITH ADEQUATE FUELLING

Fuel (with food) both before and after training and games, to support physical activity and repair muscle tissue. Fuel additionally for all the other body functions beyond fuelling for training and playing alone.



HAS A HEALTHY AND REGULAR MENSTRUAL CYCLE

Missing a period, even with hard exercise is cause for concern. Encourage the player to see a GP if the menstrual cycle becomes irregular or absent.



IS PROACTIVE AT MANAGING INJURY AND ILLNESS

Seeks timely Physiotherapy and/or GP support for injury and illness, especially if ongoing or recurrent.



SUPPORTS THEIR MENTAL WELLBEING

Allows mental downtime outside of sport by maintaining hobbies, relaxation and social connection.

1 Puberty and Development

- Puberty marks a time of transition and transformation from childhood to adulthood (adolescence).
- Puberty is a time of change physically, socially and emotionally. It is a temporary phase with changes and challenges in movement capability.
- Performance may alter as players learn how to adapt to their new height and changing body shape.



Normal Body Changes During Female Puberty



The brain signals the start of puberty by producing female sex hormones.



Body shape changes (10-16yr). Hips widen, breasts develop and there is an increase in body fat – even in highly active, adequately fuelled players.



Hormones stimulate breast budding (8-13yr), pubic and armpit hair (8-18yr), sweating and acne, and the onset of periods.



Puberty is a time for bones to strengthen and muscles to adapt. This may be an “uncoordinated” time.



Periods (menses) start (11-14yr).



During puberty there is a growth spurt (10-15yr). Adolescents will grow on average 5-7.5cm over 1-2 years.



DID YOU KNOW?

Puberty develops both the skeletal and reproductive systems. The same changes happen to everyone, they just happen at different rates for each player.

Changes to Movement and Performance

Due to rapid upward growth (growth spurt) and altered body shape, players often have changes to their; running and landing mechanics, co-ordination, reaction times, strength and movement control.

This can be a time of confusion and can affect sporting performance in young players.

During this time, training should prioritise quality, with a focus on skill development and movement control. Use the [Landing Skills](#) resource on the NetballSmart website to help your players.

As the body changes, a “less is more” approach is best to avoid overloading the developing and growing musculoskeletal system.

CHILDREN ARE NOT MINI ADULTS!

It is important to focus on the long-term athletic development of the player. This means focusing on the fundamentals of movement and creating enjoyment of and engagement in Netball.

These years support the development of robust musculoskeletal systems (bone and muscle strength), so it is vital not to overload the growing and developing player.



Supporting Players Through Puberty

TOP TIPS FOR COACHES AND PARENTS:



Acknowledge the total energy needs of adolescence (sport, school, work, sleep and social).



Emphasise recovery and rest days for adaptation to training, muscle repair and recovery (physical and mental), and to prevent fatigue.



Encourage players to fuel both before and after training.



Use positive language around body change and sport performance.



Ensure players get adequate sleep (8+ hours per night) for recovery and to reduce injury risk.

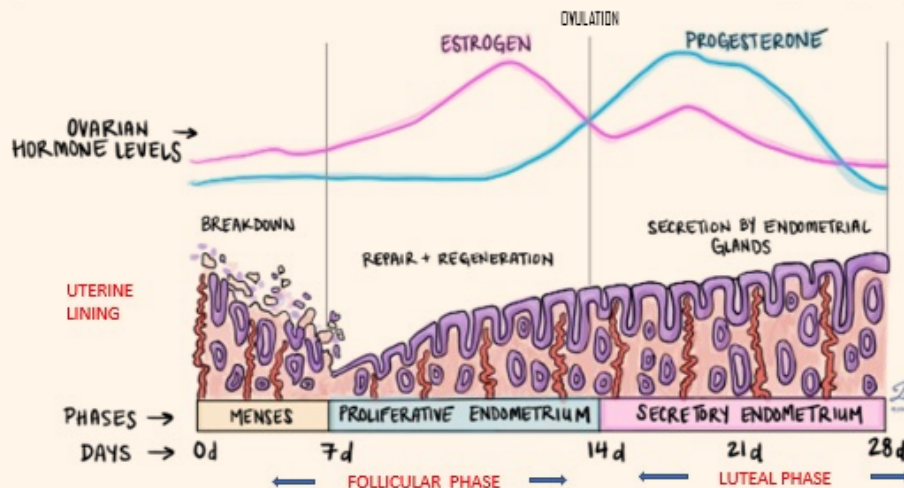


Seek medical advice and support if there are any concerns around player health or development.

DISCUSSING PUBERTAL CHANGE

It is important to provide positive messaging around body image and normal pubertal changes whilst female players adjust to their new bodies. The goal is to maintain enjoyment and engagement in Netball throughout the adolescent years.

2 The Healthy (Natural) Menstrual Cycle



- **Menstruation (Period):** Starts on day 1, the average length of the period is 3-7 days.
- **Ovulation:** The **main event** of the menstrual cycle. It produces the female sex hormones (Day 12-14).
- **Hormones:** The two key hormones made are estradiol (oestrogen) and progesterone. They support many body systems and optimise female health.
- **Two Phases:** There are two distinct phases: Follicular (Day 1-14) and Luteal (Day 15-28).

KEY FACTS

- The menstrual cycle is a barometer of health in females – like a monthly report card.
- A regular monthly cycle may indicate the female body is managing with the physical and psychological demands of their lifestyle. Things are balanced and regular.
- A period should not stop a player enjoying school, work, social or sporting activities.
- Irregular or absent menstrual cycles can be caused by altered hormone production. This is not normal and should be checked by a GP.

The Menstrual Cycle and it's Role in Health



The menstrual cycle should occur each month and is an important measure of health in female Netball players.

The regularity (or not) of the monthly menstrual cycle can give insight into a player's ability (or inability) to cope with the demands of their life, fuelling, recovery and training load.



Ovulation is the main event of the menstrual cycle and is how the female sex hormones estrogen and progesterone are made. These hormones are vital for supporting female health.

Estrogen (Estradiol) promotes bone strength and muscle strength gains, and brain and cardiovascular system health.

Progesterone reduces inflammation, regulates the immune system and mood, and supports thyroid, brain, bones, and breast tissue.



A healthy menstrual cycle is a barometer of health and wellbeing in a female.

A healthy player can train with consistency, resulting in positive responses to training. They recover well and have more opportunity for performance gains.

What is a “normal” menstrual cycle?

Whilst the type and intensity of symptoms are highly individual, a healthy menstrual cycle has definitions of what is considered “within normal limits”.

If you are concerned about the menstrual cycle of a player, please encourage them to see a GP for medical advice.



	WHAT IS “NORMAL”?	WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR?
AGE:	Average age of first period is 11-14 years.	Delayed onset, no sign of first period at 15 years.
LENGTH OF PERIOD:	Average length is 3-7 days.	Bleeding lasting past 7 days.
LENGTH OF CYCLE:	Between 21-35 days. Average: 28 days.	Irregular (longer than 35 days), frequent (shorter than 21 days) or absent periods.
BLOOD LOSS:	Average 2-4 tbsp (30-60ml) Change tampon/pad 3-4 hourly.	Heavy bleeding, leaking and large clots. Can lead to low iron stores. Regularly changing tampon/pads.
PAIN:	Abdominal cramps, pelvis and low back pain are normal, and should not limit everyday normal life.	Severe symptoms which are not managed with household medication and/or interfere with daily life.
PRE-MENSTRUAL SYMPTOMS:	Before your period low back pain, abdominal cramps, bloating, fatigue, mood changes and food cravings are normal.	Severe symptoms (pain, mood, fatigue) which interfere with daily life.

Tracking your menstrual cycle. Use an app or a calendar to mark the first day (Day 1) of a period and its duration.

Then monitor: **Symptoms:** On which days, in what way do they affect a player?

Response to training: Which sessions, in which way, on which days affect a player?

Individual requirements: Recovery, nutrition, extra rest days and mental time out needed may vary between individuals.



Playing During a Period



The menstrual cycle should not severely impact quality of life, nor prevent a player from playing Netball.

Exercising during the period is safe and can help ease the mental and physical symptoms experienced by most females.



During the period players may experience a time of calm and better moods.

Despite the perception of a negative impact on exercise, the body is capable of strong and fast performances during the period.



During the period, muscles recover well from training and playing. It is also a time where players can make peak strength gains.



Supporting a Healthy Menstrual Cycle



Support fuelling both before and after training or games and prioritise in game hydration. Encourage players to eat a wide variety of nutrient dense meals, including all food groups. This supports health and a regular menstrual cycle. In female players, under-fuelling and/or under-recovery is a common cause of irregular or absent menstrual cycles.



Provide positive messages around body image and menstruation. Have a variety of sanitary items at school, home and in team kits for emergencies. Support players through the pubertal changes with open communication and encouragement.



Players can track their own menstrual cycle, to monitor individual symptoms and the effect on their own training and playing. This will help players understand their own cycle and allow them to plan, prepare and perform for Netball.



Support players making decisions around their individual symptomology. Encourage communication on the ability to train with menstrual cycle related symptoms or issues and on how you can best support the player.



Variability of the Menstrual Cycle

Menstrual cycle variability refers to changes to the length between cycles. This will mean irregular or absent cycles, which may be cause for concern.



When players do not fuel adequately (for exercise and daily body functioning) or recover appropriately, hormone production is altered. As a result, the menstrual cycle may become irregular or stop. This is not normal even with hard exercise.



When the onset of the period (menses) first begins the menstrual cycle can be somewhat irregular. This may occur for the first few years. This variability occurs again later in life (perimenopause).



Many types of hormonal contraception affect the natural menstrual cycle. The introduction of, and/or stopping hormonal contraception may result in "irregular" or absent cycles in some females. This should stabilize. If irregularity persists, a doctor should be consulted.



During and after pregnancy, whilst breast feeding, or a miscarriage also causes variability or absence of the menstrual cycle.



Other common causes of menstrual cycle variability are long distance travel, sleep disorders, shift work, medications, medical illness or pathology.

Other Causes of Variability of the Menstrual Cycle



POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME (PCOS)

- Presents in 6-20% of females and higher in athletes.
- It is a hormonal condition with a lack of ovulation and high levels of male hormones.
- Symptoms include irregular periods, excess facial or body hair, acne and male-pattern hair loss.
- Commonly misdiagnosed or undiagnosed for many years.



ENDOMETRIOSIS

- Presents in 10% of females and can take many years to diagnose.
- It is an inflammatory condition.
- Occurs when cells from inside the uterus (endometrium) grow abnormally outside of the uterus.
- Symptoms include painful or heavy or irregular periods, nausea and vomiting, painful bowel motions, back pain, fatigue, digestive and bladder problems, pain with sex.

WHEN TO SEE A GP

There may be other causes of menstrual cycle abnormalities.

If you or a player is experiencing the menstrual symptoms noted here, or those which alter the quality of life and enjoyment of Netball, please see a GP for medical advice.



3 Total Energy Demands of Adolescence

The human body requires energy (nutrition and recovery) to support all the key body systems.

Energy demands naturally increase during puberty and adolescence due to the increased requirements for growth and development.

During this time, it is important to support a higher food intake.

Encourage nutrient dense foods from a variety of food groups including fruit and vegetables (Vit A). Additional calcium (to support bone growth and strength) and iron (to support menstruation and lean muscle mass) may be required.

Additionally, it is a time of high energy output – multiple sports practices, increasing academic work, part-time jobs and social interactions. Therefore, adolescents need to fuel for the total energy demands of their lives.

THE TOTAL ENERGY DEMANDS OF ADOLESCENTS



Low Energy Availability (LEA)

Energy (from food) is not just required for physical exercise. Energy supports all the key body systems and allows them to operate effectively. Energy supports the player to function well at school, work, home and socially.

If a player does not have enough energy to cover their full energy needs, they have Low Energy Availability (LEA) i.e., there is insufficient energy available to fuel the entire body and its demands.

HOW DOES LOW ENERGY AVAILABILITY HAPPEN?



UNDER-FUELLING:

Unintentional: Lack of awareness of the fuel required to meet total needs, poor planning or lack of time to consume adequate energy.

Intentional: Purposefully restricting the amount of food, frequency of meals/snacks or the types of food eaten.



OVER-TRAINING AND/OR UNDER-RECOVERY:

Unintentional: Over-scheduling of trainings, games and extra-curricular activities may lead to an energy deficit i.e., over-training and under-recovery. This may or may not be combined with under-fuelling.

Intentional: Over-exercising including adding extra sessions. Reducing sleep through waking early for training. Not taking rest days or having light training days.

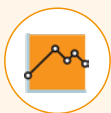


Prolonged Low Energy Availability (LEA) will, in time, affect health and performance and can lead to RED-S.

4 Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S)



Normally, the body can tolerate small changes in energy levels. When LEA persists, the body will need to conserve energy. Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S) occurs as a result of prolonged Low Energy Availability (LEA).



When an energy deficit becomes prolonged, the body will need to conserve energy. It does this by shutting some other body systems down. System shut down presents with signs and symptoms noted in the next few pages.



When one or more body system 'shuts down' this can cause a detrimental effect on health and Netball performance.



RED-S: How Health is Affected

A prolonged state of Low Energy Availability (LEA) will influence multiple physiological body systems. The effect on one or more systems is termed RED-S and can have detrimental health consequences.

SLEEP ISSUES

Sleep disturbances, night sweats



ABSENT OR IRREGULAR PERIODS

15yr+ no period,
3 months+ without period



PERFORMANCE

Diminishing performance



GUT ISSUES

Constipation, diarrhoea, bloating



RED-S: The Health Effects LEA



RECURRING INJURY OR ILLNESS

Soft tissue injury, bone injury
leading to stress fracture/
osteoporosis, respiratory
tract illness



TEMPERATURE

Feel the cold easily,
cold hands and feet



MENTAL HEALTH

Poor concentration, irritable,
low mood

RED-S: How Performance is Affected

Over time, prolonged Low Energy Availability (LEA) will influence multiple physiological body systems. The effect on one or more systems is termed RED-S and can have detrimental performance consequences.

DECREASED COORDINATION

Increased injury risk



DECREASED MUSCLE STRENGTH



DECREASED MUSCLE GLYCOGEN STORES



DECREASED TRAINING RESPONSE

Unable to improve fitness despite training



RED-S: The Performance Effects LEA



IRRITABILITY/ DEPRESSION



IMPAIRED JUDGEMENT

Decreased concentration, poor decision making on court



DECREASED ENDURANCE PERFORMANCE

Inability to cope with a full game

Common Presentations of RED-S Symptoms in Adolescents



BONE HEALTH

Can initially present in young females as Medial Tibial Stress Syndrome (MTSS) or “shin splints/pain”. MTSS is related to high training load and influenced by lower limb and pelvis strength and control in females. MTSS should not be an accepted consequence of playing sport. If it progresses, it may lead to bone stress reaction(s)/stress fractures.



INJURY AND ILLNESS

The “injury cascade” refers to recurrent or continued injury and illness, often occurring in quick succession. Recurrent injury and/or illness relates to general player health and wellbeing.



IRREGULAR OR ABSENT MENSTRUAL CYCLE(S)

Exercise alone should not cause irregular or absent menstrual cycles. Absence of the menstrual cycle impacts on bone health and injury risk due to the altered production of many important health hormones.



PROLONGED FATIGUE

Adolescent players may present with:

- Reluctance or de-motivated to train
- Reduced performance
- Reduced recovery between training and games
- Irritability or changes in mood
- Ongoing tiredness.

Ongoing fatigue should not be an accepted consequence of playing sport. It may be a sign of over-training, under-fuelling, under-recovery or a combination of all 3.

In adolescents, look to the underlying principles of nutrition (energy in), load schedules (energy out) and recovery (energy balance).



RED-S: Identifying 'At Risk' Players

HOW DOES A PLAYER WITH RED-S PRESENT?

- Athletes with RED-S present with individual signs and symptoms.
- We are unable to predict which system(s), in which player, at which time will 'shut down'.
- A player may or may not maintain a healthy menstrual cycle. This is only one body system that can be affected.

WHAT PLAYERS ARE 'AT RISK'?

- Early specialisation sports – usually in one sport.
- Players involved in multiple sports and activities – “busy kids”.
- Multiple life stressors e.g., sport, family stress, academic pressure.
- Perfectionist tendencies and high achievers – often in multiple areas in life.
- Players entering higher level programs/training – hours and intensity increase.
- Previous injuries (especially bone) and recurrent illnesses e.g., coughs and colds.
- Players with disordered eating practices i.e., avoiding food groups, restricted eating.
- Players with disordered training practices e.g., over-training, skipping rest days.



RED-S is caused by sustained and prolonged low energy availability from over-training, under-fuelling and under-recovery, or a combination of all 3.

5 Relative Supporting Female Player Health and Wellbeing

Female players have unique needs that differ from their male counterparts due to the menstrual cycle and the hormones produced. Despite this, the key considerations for health and performance still remain the 'big rocks' :



TRAINING STIMULUS - TRAINING LOAD AND TYPE

During adolescence, it is important not to over-load or over-train the developing musculoskeletal system. It is vital for the young female player to develop strength (especially lower body) to support play and their bodies. See [Body Weight Strengthening](#) resource on the NetballSmart website.



NUTRITION - ADEQUATE FUELLING

In adolescence, the energy demands are significant. A well-balanced player with adequate fuelling will adapt better to training and reduce playing time lost due to injury or illness.



ADAPTATION - RECOVERY AND DOWNTIME

Recovery from training is vital in order to make improvements in performance. In adolescent players, ensure at least one rest day from all sport per week and 8+ hours sleep per night. Player health should incorporate both the mental and physical state of the player. See [My Smart Roadmap](#) for recovery ideas.

Supporting Player Health and Wellbeing

Coaches, parents, whānau or teammates may have concerns about a players' overall health. Here are some questions which can gather insight on Energy Availability (EA) and/or symptoms of RED-S.



TRAINING

- Is the player enjoying training?
- Is the player motivated to train and compete?
- Is the training balanced and are all elements covered? i.e., strength, core, fitness.



SLEEP

- Is the player getting 8+ hours of sleep per night?
- Is the player often fatigued or not recovered?
- Do they have at least one rest day from all sport per week?



NUTRITION

- How are they eating in and around training?
- Do they avoid meals or specific food groups?
- Do they have energy throughout training and games?



INJURY/ILLNESS

- Is a player regularly injured or unwell?
- Is there a history of bone injury e.g., shin pain, stress reaction or stress fracture?



MENSTRUAL CYCLE

- Is the menstrual cycle present and regular?
- Are they taking a hormonal contraception which may mask issues of the menstrual cycle?



OTHER INTERESTS

- Is the player engaging in social activities and down-time away from Netball and other sport(s)?

If you have concerns, please encourage the player or their whānau to seek an assessment from a GP or Registered Health Professional.

Supporting Players Menstrual Health

MENSTRUAL CYCLE TRACKING



Encourage players to learn about their female bodies by tracking and monitoring their menstrual cycle. There are many apps designed to monitor the menstrual cycle, but a paper diary works just as well.



It can help players understand their individual response to their menstrual cycle. Therefore players can plan, prepare and adapt to exercise during the menstrual cycle. This is called menstrual pre-hab.



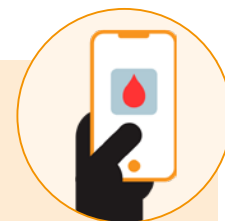
Awareness enhances healthy communication about menstrual cycle related issues with coaches, whānau and peers.

Use an app or a calendar to mark the first day (Day 1) of the period and its duration.

MONITOR THE SYMPTOMS: On which days, in what way?

MONITOR THE RESPONSE TO TRAINING: In which sessions, in which way, on which days?

MONITOR THE REQUIREMENTS: For recovery, nutrition, extra rest days, mental health needs and social time out.



Supporting Player Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental Health – A “state of wellbeing in which the individual realises their own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work/play productively and make a contribution to their community.”

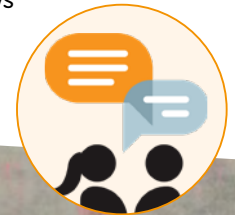
Mental illness and mental health issues do occur in young people. Adolescence and early adulthood can be a key time when mental health problems may develop.

Mental ill-health is associated with:

- Poorer academic outcomes
- Poor social supports
- Unemployment
- Substance abuse
- Increased risk of suicide and suicidal thoughts.




CREATING AN AWARENESS OF MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

- Coaches, parents and whānau need to build awareness and understanding of mental health needs in adolescents.
- Encourage players to identify their person(s) of support, should they need to talk.
- Providing supportive environments helps players develop psychologically, emotionally, socially and in turn, physically.
- Support individuality and celebrate differences.
- Empower independent thinking, goal setting and self management.
- It is normal for moods to go up and down. Feeling sad for a day or so is normal. Make bad days and challenges part of “normal” life.



The Holistic and Positive Benefits of Netball

Within the right environment, participation in Netball can have positive benefits on mental health and wellbeing.

	THE POSITIVES	BE AWARE OF THE THREATS TO PLAYER WELLBEING
	<p>POSITIVE PHYSICAL BENEFITS OF NETBALL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased neuromuscular, cardiovascular and respiratory function • Improved immune system • Improved metabolism • Prevention of chronic disease. 	<p>Physical wellbeing can be affected by injury and illness, over-training or under-recovery and unhealthy nutritional practices.</p>
	<p>POSITIVE MENTAL BENEFITS OF NETBALL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased self-esteem • Improved mood and concentration • Aids sleep • Can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. 	<p>Mental wellbeing can be affected by under performance, pressure and expectation, burnout and development of maladaptive behaviour e.g., withdrawal, avoidance, anger.</p>
	<p>POSITIVE SOCIAL BENEFITS OF NETBALL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aids communication and relationship building • Promotes collaboration • Develops a sense of belonging • Builds resilience and leadership qualities. 	<p>Social wellbeing can be compromised by unsupportive environments, controlling practices/environments, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, abuse, conflict, isolation.</p>

What can our Netball Organisations do?

Actions to mental health in community sports.



RAISE AWARENESS

Aim to build mental health awareness and understanding within your environment. Providing written and in-person education on why mental health is important in sport is a proactive approach. Use resources available in the community.



BUILD A CULTURE OF SUPPORT

Supporting mental wellbeing promotes sporting excellence. Normalise life challenges and ensure you support those struggling. Encourage them to seek help.



IDENTIFY CHAMPIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH

Seek out and promote those working within mental health in Netball. Be a role model for mental wellbeing.



OPEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Reduce stigma by normalising discussions about mental health and offering opportunities to talk. Be aware of those struggling and ensure there is active support.



ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

Mental health issues often cause disengagement from sport. Encourage players to continue participation and maintain engagement through communication, flexibility, and removing barriers.



EMBRACE DIVERSITY

Create atmospheres that are inclusive, support individuality and celebrate differences. Be a role model for inclusivity in sport.



FOSTER WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE

Implement a strengths-based model and focus on individual capabilities. Empower independent thinking and goal setting. Help the player to set SMART goals.



BUILD LINKS TO EXTERNAL SUPPORTS

Young players require consistent messaging around mental health and wellbeing. Develop and promote a network of external community support within your sporting environment.

What can our Players do?



ENCOURAGE THEM TO KNOW WHEN THEY MAY NEED HELP

Help them to develop a self-awareness for their own needs. Advise them to seek help when troubled thoughts or actions become persistent. Encourage them to be proactive in seeking medical advice for injury or illness.



IDENTIFY SUPPORT PEOPLE

Encourage and support them to have a few key people whom they trust to discuss their health and wellbeing. This may be friends, whānau, teachers or coaches.



EVERYONE HAS BAD DAYS

It is normal for moods to go up and down. Feeling sad for a day or so is normal. If their low mood persists, encourage them to be brave and meet with a support person.



IT'S OK TO NOT BE OK

Mental health matters, so seeking help and support is a sign of strength and courage.



Top Tips for Supporting Healthy Minds in Netball



Look beyond the scoreboard to measure success. See performance as the outcome of healthy, happy and returning players. To learn and to thrive, young people need positive relationships and environments which are fun, supportive and trusting.



Acknowledge, support and grow player strengths, not just weaknesses. Use Netball to develop psychological, emotional and social growth. Through sport, adolescents can gain courage, self-belief, and self-confidence.



Remember, a very small proportion of young people will become elite athletes, focus on the development of healthy active adults who enjoy playing Netball. Keep the “love of the game”.

Support Networks for Player Health and Wellbeing

If you suspect a player is showing signs of poor female player health as mentioned in this handbook, here are some guidelines on where to seek support.



LOW ENERGY AVAILABILITY, GASTROINTESTINAL ISSUES, DISORDERED EATING

GP, Nutritionist, Dietician, Sports Physician



MENTAL HEALTH, MOOD DISORDERS

GP, Psychologist, Counsellor



MENSTRUAL DYSFUNCTION

GP, Sports Physician, Endocrinologist



RECURRENT INJURY, ILLNESS, POOR PERFORMANCE

Physiotherapist, Sports Physician, GP

Timely assessment and interventions from appropriate health professionals can prevent long term health consequences, reduce lost time to sport through injury and illness, improve sports performance and maintain engagement in Netball.

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NetballSmart has a wide range of resources in support of the messages of SmartHealth:

www.netballsmart.co.nz

FOR PLAYERS



FOR PARENTS



RECOVERY



LANDING SKILLS



BALANCED PLAYERS



NETBALL
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