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### Eating Disorders Risk Within Division III Atlantic East Conference Female Athletes

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Previous studies have shown that female athletes are at higher risk of developing eating disorders than their peers (Lichtenstein, M., 2018). **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study was to investigate the eating disorder risk among NCAA Division three (DIII) female athletes. **METHODS:** A total of 162 NCAA Division III Atlantic East conference female athletes volunteered for this study. The athletes completed the EAT-26 survey. EAT-26 is not a diagnostic tool but can suggest the symptoms commonly associated with eating disorders. The total score can range from zero(min) to 78 (max). A score of higher than 20 on EAT-26 is indicative of a subclinical eating disorder (Garner,1982). **RESULTS:** The median ( $\pm$ MAD) EAT 26 score was 8( $\pm$ 5). The observed range for EAT 26 scores was zero (min) to 47 (max). Out of 162, 23 athletes (14.2%) had a score of above 20. **CONCLUSION:** This study shows that there is a susceptibility of developing eating disorders in DIII female athletes. This suggests the importance of nutritional staff in DIII athletic departments. Future studies may examine the effect of season, type of sport, Division, and nutritional education interventions on eating behaviors.

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