LOW ENERGY AVAILABILITY IN ATHLETICS

Many athletes deliberately decrease energy intake and/or increase energy expenditure to achieve weight/body fat losses and optimize their performance. This low energy availability may have deleterious impacts on health and performance.

**CONSEQUENCES**

- Reduced testosterone levels
- Reduced libido
- Impaired training capacity
- Cardiovascular disease
- Impaired recovery
- Impaired bone health
- Functional hypothalamic amenorrhea
- Increased risk of injuries & illness
- Impaired muscle mass & neuromuscular function
- Impaired performance level

**CAUSES**

- Disordered eating behavior
- Time constraints
- Intentional alterations in body mass or body composition
- Appetite changes

**SOLUTIONS**

- Preventive educational programs & screening
- Increasing energy intake
- Team approach including a sport physician, dietitian, physiologist & psychologist
- Decreasing training load

Reference: Melin et al. IJSNEM 2019. ©Copyright. IAAF 2019. All rights reserved. IAAF, Health & Science