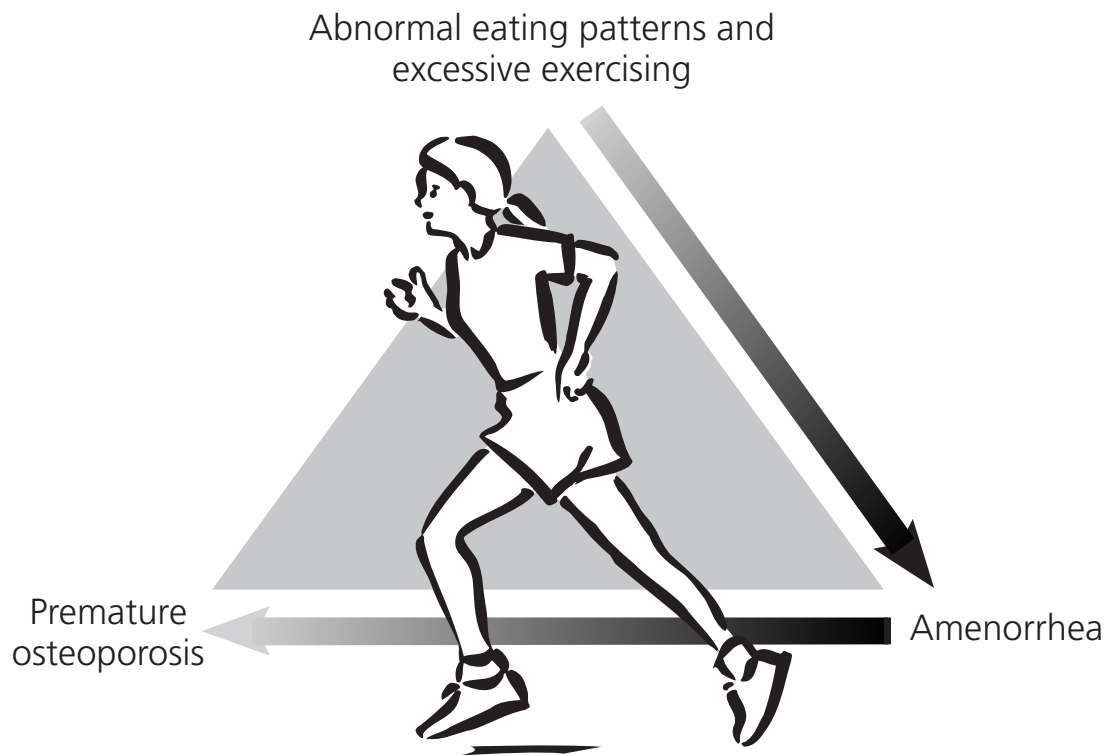


H6-2 The Female Athlete Triad



Disordered eating is the event from which the other two components of the triad flow. Since exercise is often not enough to lead female athletes to the excessive thinness they are pursuing, they may resort to harmful eating and weight-loss practices. These behaviors and effects include:

Behavior

Fasting
Diet pills
Diuretics (water pills)
Laxatives
Sauna
“Fat-free” diets
Excessive exercise
Enemas
Self-induced vomiting

Consequence

Loss of lean body mass and lowered metabolic rate.
Medical side effects. Lost weight usually regained.
Dehydration. No fat loss. Electrolyte abnormalities.
Dehydration. No fat loss. May be addictive.
Dehydration. No fat loss.
Lack of essential vitamins. Difficult to maintain.
Risk of injury.
Dehydration. Gastrointestinal problems.
Dehydration. Acid-base and electrolyte imbalances. Gastrointestinal bleeding. Erosion of dental enamel. Swollen parotid glands.

Source: Otis, C. 1998. Too slim, amenorrheic, fracture-prone: The female athlete triad. *ACSM's Health and Fitness Journal* 2(1): 20–25. Reprinted with permission from the publisher.