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Important Colloquium Held. The Female Athlete Triad discussed by physicians and scientists.

(Oakland, CA) – A Colloquium focusing on nutritional problems in young female athletes was held on September 21 & 22, 2006, through the Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education. This colloquium is the first important step in addressing the risks of poor nutrition and misguided efforts to lose weight on the long term ability of young athletes to perform, as well as maintain bone health throughout their lives.

“An important step was taken this week in educating young athletes about the importance of matching the calories they eat with the energy they expend during training.” says Barbara Drinkwater, PhD, FACSM. “An energy deficit interferes with normal growth and development and puts young female athletes at risk for stress fractures and clinical eating disorders. A lack of menstrual cycles signals that female hormone levels have decreased to a point where development of healthy bones is impaired. We recognized the need to address this growing problem before we end up with a generation of women with fragile bones in their 30’s.”

The cascade of events moving from inadequate nutrition to changes in the reproductive cycle with a consequent negative impact on bone is termed the Female Athlete Triad. The combination of poor nutrition and low estrogen levels during adolescence prevents the skeleton from maturing normally. These young athletes are more likely to have stress fractures than fit athletes with normal menstrual cycles.

A brief and whitepaper discussing the findings of the colloquium will follow in the coming months. The participants also made recommendations for coaches, athletes, parents and their health providers. This information will be available through FORE.

About The Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education

The Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education (FORE) is a leading resource for osteoporosis information, education and bone health promotion and a national leader in developing proven models for treatment, intervention and prevention of osteoporosis throughout the cycle of life and among diverse populations.

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