

SPORTS MEDICINE: Pregnancy and Abortion Participation Guidelines



Pregnancy and Abortion Participation
Reviewed: 8/15/2023

Goals:

- Inform the student-athlete of their eligibility options and rights to participate.
- Inform the student-athlete of their scholarship options and ERAU Athletics financial responsibility.
- Inform athletic administration, coaches, and staff on their role related to student-athlete pregnancy.

Student Athlete Eligibility Options and Rights to Participate:

Embry-Riddle Athletics has established guidelines to protect our student-athletes who may be pregnant while participating in intercollegiate athletics. It is essential for the student-athlete to notify their assigned Athletic Trainer or Director of Sports Medicine at the earliest suspicion or known date of pregnancy so that the sports medicine staff can collectively work together to minimize the risks to the student-athlete and her unborn fetus.

Depending on the case, the Director of Sports Medicine will notify Mea Felps-Darley (Associate Athletic Director Compliance/SWA), Linda Dammer (Title IX Coordinator), head coach, and Team Physician. No pregnant student-athlete will be allowed to participate in their sport or conditioning until first being cleared by their obstetrician then by the Team Physician at ERAU. The student-athlete may be able to participate in competitive activity depending on the sport* in which she is involved and at the discretion of the Team Physician and obstetrician. The student-athlete must also be cleared by their obstetrician and ERAU Team Physician before returning to activity postpartum, or in the event of miscarriage or abortion. Travel with the team will also be at the discretion of the obstetrician and ERAU Team Physician. (*Each case will be evaluated on an individual and sport basis, and treated as appropriate.)

Current guidelines for exercise during pregnancy and the postpartum period from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists indicate that regular, moderate intensity exercise concurrent with established levels have a benefit to both the mother and the fetus. Student-athletes with any of the following conditions will NOT be allowed to participate:

Hemodynamically significant heart disease Incompetent cervix/cerclage Persistent second and third trimester bleeding Premature labor during current pregnancy Pregnancy induced hypertension	Restrictive lung disease Multiple gestation at risk for premature labor Placenta praevia after 26 weeks of gestation Ruptured membrane
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Student-athletes with any of the following warning signs should terminate exercise immediately:

Vaginal bleeding Dizziness Chest pain Calf pain or swelling (r/o thrombophlebitis) Decreased fetal movement	Dyspnea before exertion Headache Muscle weakness Preterm labor Amniotic fluid leakage
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Student-Athlete Scholarship and ERAU Athletics Financial Responsibility:

ERAU Intercollegiate student-athlete's scholarship cannot be reduced or canceled during the term of its award for reasons of pregnancy. The ERAU Intercollegiate Athletic Department will not provide care for, nor be financially responsible for, any student-athlete for the following:

Preplanned pregnancy Delivery and hospital charges Abortion Complications arising from the aforementioned	Unplanned pregnancy Well baby care Miscarriage Any other pregnancy related injuries/illness/or conditions
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ERAU Athletics Coaches, Staff, and Administration Restrictions:

If coaches are informed by the student-athlete or Director of Sports Medicine of a pregnancy, they should maintain the privacy of the information, and should NOT counsel the student-athlete on pregnancy issues such as abortion, adoption, or parenting. If a student-athlete chooses to inform a coach they are or may be pregnant, the coach must immediately inform the Director of Sports Medicine. The student-athlete will be referred to the ERAU Team Physician, Student Health Services, or Counseling Center regarding any of their questions, concerns, and appropriate medical referrals.