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STUDENT-ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH STATUS REPORT: COPING WITH COVID-19 AND ADDRESSING RACIAL JUSTICE

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Data Sources

▶ NCAA ACHA-NCHA Survey

- ▶ Semi-annual survey of college students, data span five administrations from fall 2015 through fall 2017. Institutions have authority over sampling, survey method and time of administration. Data from 152,829 full-time undergraduate students ages 18-24 attending NCAA-member institutions. 9.2% (N=14,134) identified as a varsity athlete.

▶ NCAA GOALS Survey

- ▶ Nationally representative survey conducted in spring 2019. Consistent survey administration overseen by Faculty Athletic Representatives at more than 500 campuses. Approximately 22,500 responses; data weighted to ensure representativeness.

▶ NCAA Student-Athlete COVID-19 Well-Being Study

- ▶ Online survey conducted between April 10-May 1, 2020; snowball sample. Approximately 38,000 participants across divisions.

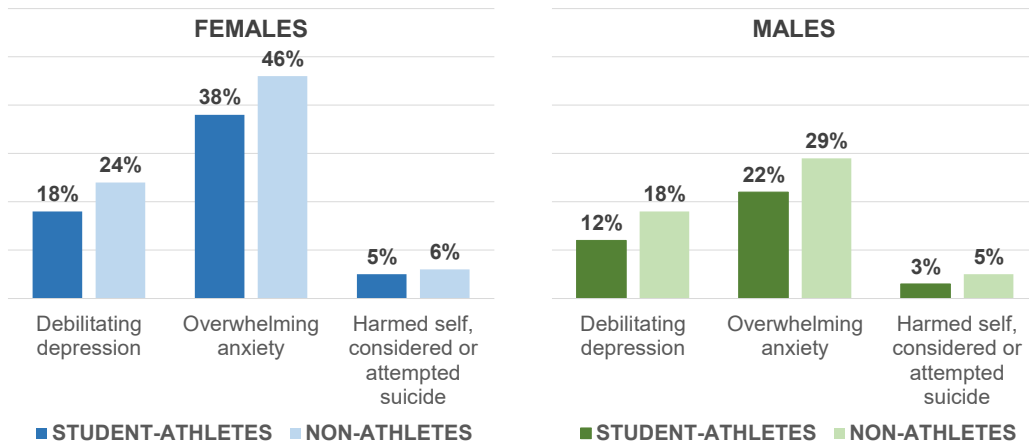
▶ NCAA Fall 2020 Well-Being Survey

- ▶ Online survey conducted between October 6-November 2, 2020; snowball sample. Approximately 25,000 participants across divisions.



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Mental Well-Being, Comparison Data (Experienced within the last 30 days)



American College Health Association. American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment, Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2016, Spring 2017, Fall 2017 [data file]. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association [producer and distributor]; (2018-11-15).

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Have you felt so depressed that it was difficult to function? (Yes, in the last 30 days)

	STUDENT-ATHLETES	NON-ATHLETES*	ATHLETE NON-ATHLETE GAP
Male	12%	18%	+6%
Female	18%	24%	+6%
White Males	10%	17%	+7%
Males of Color	16%	19%	+3%
White Females	16%	23%	+7%
Females of Color	23%	26%	+3%
*Non-athletes are full-time undergraduate students between the ages of 18-24 attending NCAA-member institutions who do not identify as varsity athletes.			

American College Health Association. American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment, Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2016, Spring 2017, Fall 2017 [data file]. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association [producer and distributor]; (2018-11-15).

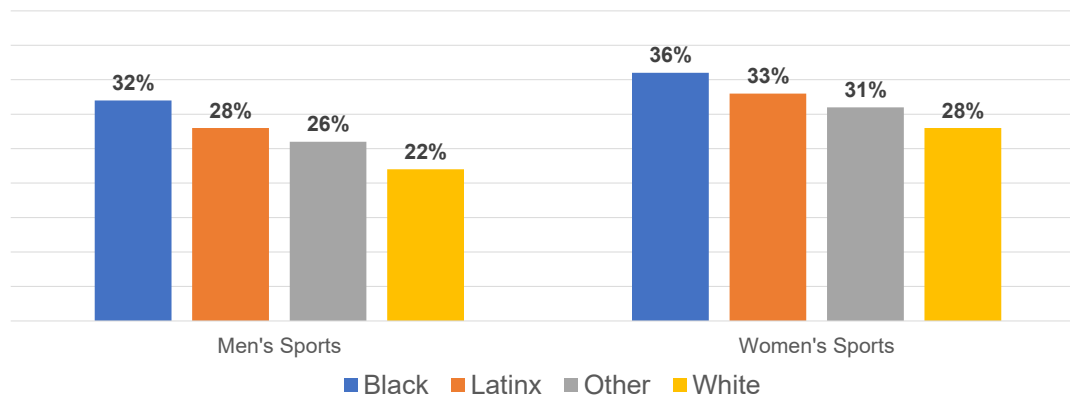
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In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling so high that you couldn't overcome them?

(% Responding Very Often or Fairly Often by Race/Ethnicity)



Note: Endorsement of top two scale points on a 6-point scale. Race/ethnicity breakdowns restricted to subgroups with over 100 SAs in each gender/division disaggregation. "Other" includes those who identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Multiracial. Source: NCAA GOALS Study, 2019.



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Student-Athlete Perceptions of Coaches' Approach to Mental Wellness

(% Responding Agree or Strongly Agree)

	Men's Sports		Women's Sports	
	BIPOC	White	BIPOC	White
My coaches care about my mental well-being	74%	76%	66%	71%
I would feel comfortable talking to my coaches about mental health issues	63%	62%	47%	50%

Note: Endorsement of top two scale points on a 6-point scale. BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and includes those who identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Multiracial. Source: NCAA GOALS Study, 2019.



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2020 Data Examining the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Mental Wellness



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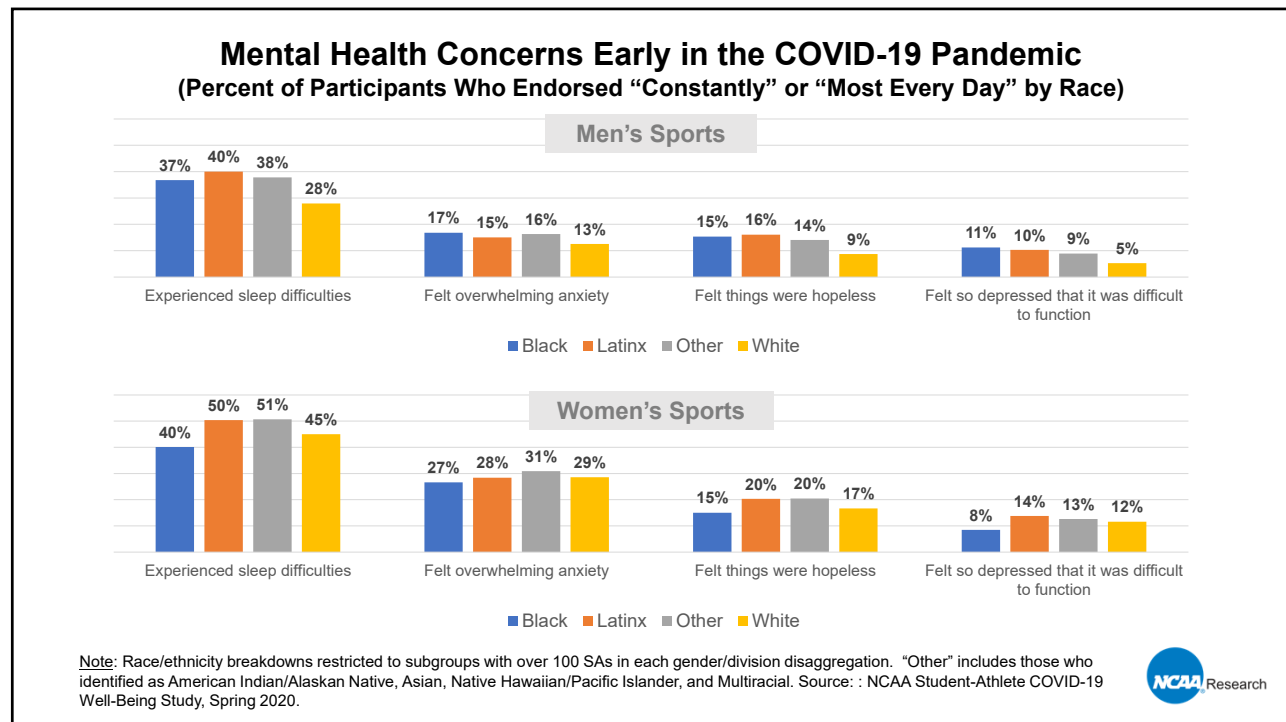
Mental Health Concerns Early in the COVID-19 Pandemic (Percent of Participants Who Endorsed “Constantly” or “Most Every Day”)

	Men's Sports	Women's Sports
Felt overwhelmed by all you had to do	31%	50%
Experienced sleep difficulties	31%	42%
Felt mentally exhausted	26%	39%
Felt very lonely	22%	33%
Felt a sense of loss	21%	31%
Felt sad	17%	31%
Felt overwhelming anxiety	14%	27%
Felt overwhelming anger	11%	11%
Felt things were hopeless	11%	16%
Felt so depressed that it was difficult to function	7%	9%

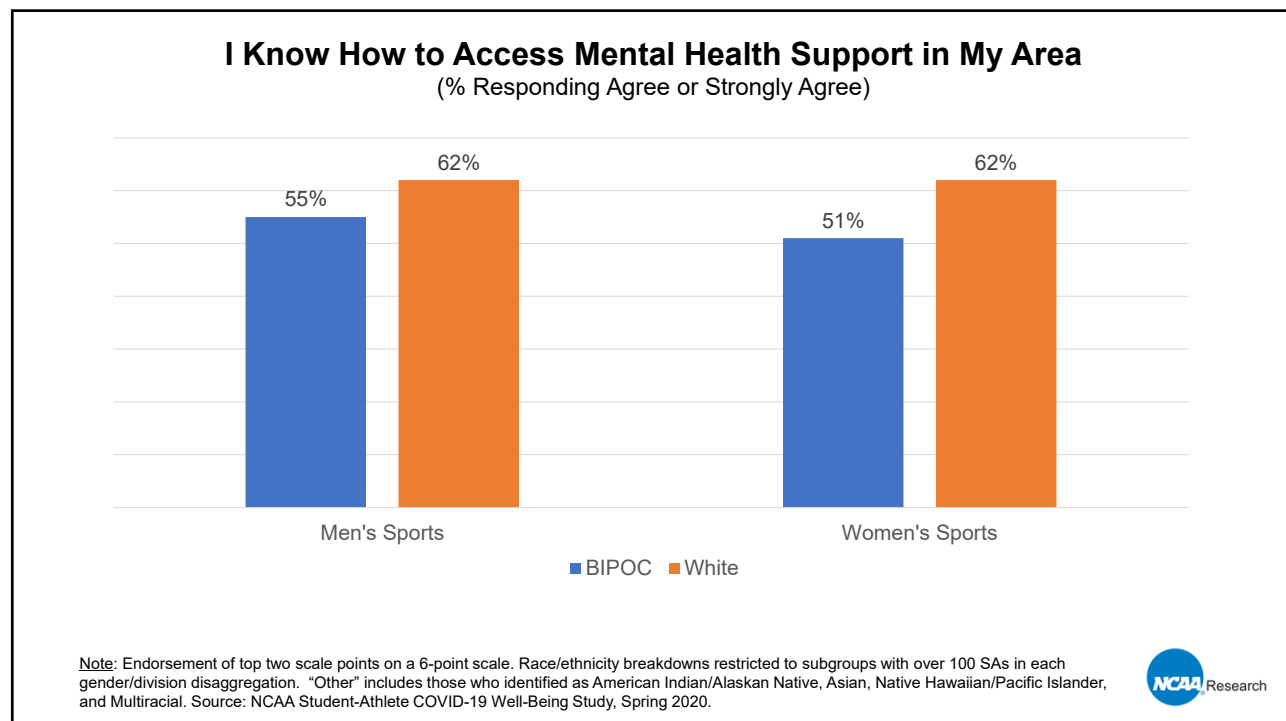
Source: NCAA Student-Athlete COVID-19 Well-Being Study, Spring 2020.



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Spring 2020 Barriers to Training by Racial Group (Percent of Participants who “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)

Barriers to Training	Black	Latinx	Other	White
Local regulations (travel, facility closures, etc.)	78%	81%	84%	83%
Lack of access to appropriate facilities	78%	79%	80%	80%
Fear of exposure to COVID-19	50%	53%	48%	41%
Family/personal responsibilities	40%	40%	34%	27%
Lack of motivation to train	36%	42%	41%	40%
Too stressed or anxious to train	21%	26%	23%	20%
Too sad or depressed to train	14%	16%	15%	13%

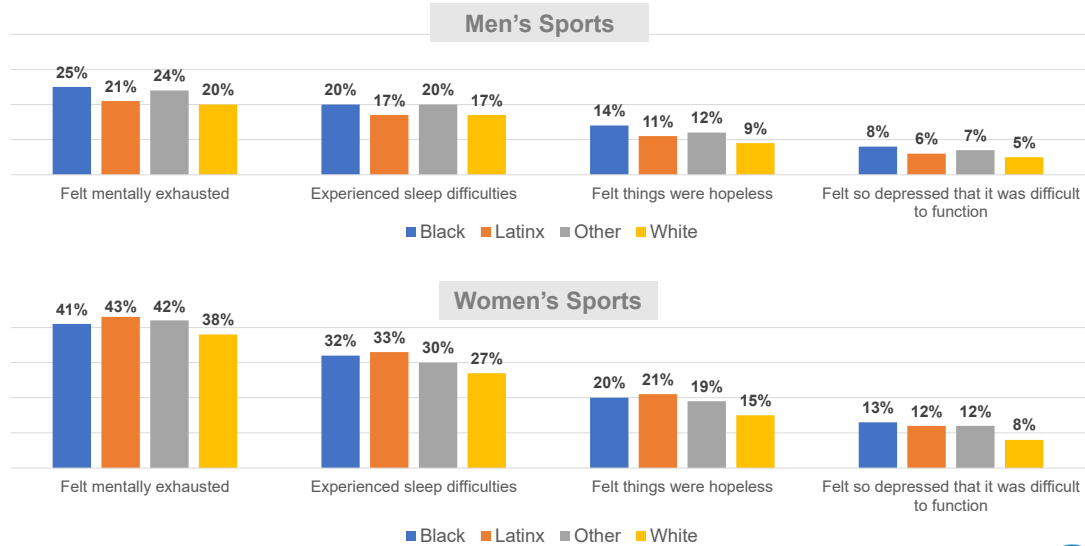
Note: Top 2 points on a 6-point scale. Those unable to train due to injury were excluded from this item. “Other” includes American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Other, and those who selected multiple racial identities. Source: NCAA Student-Athlete COVID-19 Well-Being Study, Spring 2020.



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Fall 2020 Mental Health Concerns

(Percent of Participants Who Endorsed “Constantly” or “Most Every Day” by Race)



Source: NCAA Fall Well-Being Study, 2020.



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**Factors Negatively Impacting Student-Athlete
Mental Health in the Month Prior to Survey**
(Percent Who Responded “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” by Race/Ethnicity)

	Black	Latinx	Other	White
Academic worries	42%	45%	47%	43%
Financial worries	35%	39%	30%	21%
COVID-19 health concerns	33%	38%	35%	30%
Personal experiences of racism or racial trauma	31%	10%	14%	3%
Lack of access to your sport	30%	39%	32%	34%
Political disagreements with family or friends	15%	14%	18%	12%
Natural disasters (e.g. flooding, hurricanes, wildfires) impacting your community	9%	12%	8%	4%

Note: Top 2 points on a 6-point scale. The survey asked, “How much do you agree or disagree that the following have negatively impacted your mental health within the last month?” The survey was in the field from Oct. 6-Nov. 2, 2020. “Other” includes American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Other, and those who selected multiple racial identities. Source: NCAA Fall Well-Being Study, 2020.



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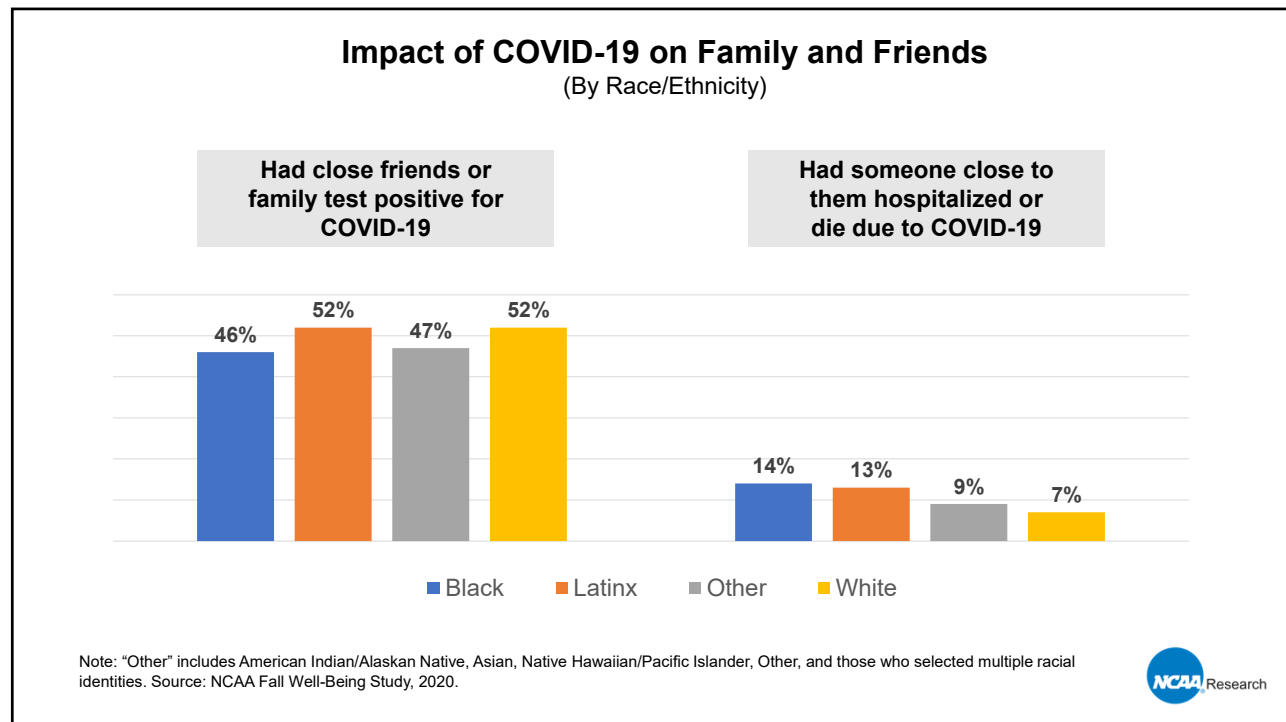
Barriers to Training by Racial Group
(Percent of Participants who “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)

Barriers to Training	Black	Latinx	Other	White
Fear of exposure to COVID-19	45%	42%	42%	37%
Local regulations (travel, facility closures, etc.)	39%	44%	43%	42%
Lack of access to appropriate facilities	31%	31%	30%	27%
Family/personal responsibilities	19%	20%	16%	10%
Too stressed or anxious to train	17%	20%	20%	17%
Too sad or depressed to train	11%	11%	13%	10%

Note: Participants in all racial groups saw a decrease of 5 percentage points or more from Spring 2020 in barriers related to local regulations, lack of access or motivation to train and family responsibilities. Participants identifying as Black, Latinx or another race/ethnicity decreased 5 percentage points or more in fear of exposure to COVID-19. Latinx participants were the only group to show a significant decrease in barriers related to their mental health (too anxious or depressed to train). Those unable to train due to injury were excluded from this item. “Other” includes American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Other, and those who selected multiple racial identities. Top 2 points on a 6-point scale. Source: NCAA Fall Well-Being Study, 2020.



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Student-athletes' suggestions for athletics staff or coaches to support athlete mental well-being

- ▶ **Regular coach-athlete team and individual check-ins; establish peer-to-peer buddy system**
 - ▶ "Have the coaching staff hold team meetings frequently advising people to seek help if needed. Enforce older athletes in checking in on new-comers." – Division I baseball
- ▶ **Prioritize student-athlete mental health**
 - ▶ "Understand that this situation is very mentally challenging and it's acceptable to be struggling." – Division II women's basketball
- ▶ **Make modifications that reflect the impact of COVID-19 on individual and team well-being**
 - ▶ "The most important thing that they could do is be understanding. We (student-athletes) are navigating difficult waters with areas of uncertainty and the effects of COVID-19 on ourselves, friends, families, loved ones, etc. and it is different for everyone. We just want our athletics department to be cognizant of what we are going through [...] I feel that there has been a sense of that latitude, but we hope that understanding is continued." –Division I men's wrestling

Source: NCAA Fall Well-Being Study, 2020

NCAA

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