Pregnancy Policy & Procedure

2013-2014
POLICY

The Brevard College Athletic Department recognizes that with increasing numbers of women participating in collegiate sports, there is a chance that more women may become pregnant while playing intercollegiate sports. The purpose of this policy is to develop guidelines to protect the health, confidentiality, scholarship, and ability of the pregnant student-athlete to participate while also assisting medical providers, coaches and administrators with uniform guidelines that address this issue. This policy was developed based on NCAA guidelines for participation by a pregnant student-athlete. This policy sets forth the protections that should be provided for pregnant and parenting students, including those with pregnancy related conditions. It also prohibits retaliation against any student-athlete or employee in regards to the enforcement of this Pregnancy Policy.

PROCEDURE

1. Managing the Pregnant Student-Athlete

   A. If a student-athlete becomes pregnant while she is an active student-athlete with any intercollegiate sports team at Brevard College, that student athlete is required to inform the Sports Medicine Staff as soon as possible. All information provided to the Sports Medicine Staff will be kept confidential and only released to appropriate persons with the specific consent of the student-athlete.

   B. The student-athlete will not have to immediately withdraw from their sport, however the student-athlete will be required to provide documentation of medical clearance to participate in their intercollegiate sport by their primary care physician and/or OB/GYN within a timely manner. The athletic department will allow a pregnant or parenting student-athlete to fully participate on their team, including all team-related activities, unless the student-athlete’s physician or other medical caregiver certifies that participation is not medically safe.

   C. The Sports Medicine Staff will encourage the student-athlete to seek help and advice. These may include representatives of counseling services, family physician/ OBGYN, team physician, and others.

   D. If the student-athlete chooses to continue participation, the student-athlete must receive appropriate pre-natal counseling from the appropriate athletic trainer along with the team physician and/or a specialist. This counseling helps the student-athlete understand the medical condition and the risk of injury to the student athlete, as well as to the fetus.

   E. Current knowledge indicates that women who exercise at “sub maximal levels” do not appear to be at great risk for spontaneous abortion, do not have a greater incidence of complications during labor and delivery than their sedentary counterparts and do not adversely affect fetal well-being. However, the level of participation in many sports programs requires sustained maximal exercise and this is noted to be harmful to both mother and fetus, possibly resulting in increases in deep-body temperature that exceed the teratogenic threshold, a higher incidence of fetal growth retardation and increased risk for premature birth. The American College of Sports Medicine discourages heavy weight lifting or similar activities that require straining or valsalva. Depending on your sport and with your healthcare professional’s approval you may be able to continue training and competing up to a certain time.
frame. The decisional-support team will provide mandatory monitoring of your health and academic progress, and will assist you in your return to competition if that is your desire.

F. If the student athlete chooses to terminate the pregnancy, it still requires a period of time for recovery that will need to be coordinated with the family physician / OB/GYN and the Sports Medicine Team.

G. Only after counseling and discussion has occurred, will the Team Physician and/or specialist in conjunction with the student athlete determine the length of participation and any activity restrictions. The student-athlete must sign a properly executed document of understanding and waiver before being permitted to continue their athletic participation.

H. No coach or other athletics department personnel shall suggest to any student-athlete that his or her continued participation on a team will be affected in any way by pregnancy, parental, or marital status.

I. The athletic department’s secondary insurance policy does not cover pregnancy related care and/or any injury, illness, or complication related to pregnancy. All costs related to pregnancy are the responsibility of the student-athlete.

2. Legal and Administrative Issues

Brevard College complies with Title IX and does not discriminate on the basis of pregnancy.

A. The Athletic Department will allow a leave of absence for pregnancy as long as medically necessary and will reinstate the athlete to the position held before pregnancy.

B. Pregnancy is treated no differently than any other type of temporary medical condition. The NCAA Division II Manual Rule 14.2.2.2 states:
   a. Pregnancy Exception. A member institution may approve a two-semester or three-quarter extension of this 10-semester/15-quarter period of eligibility for a female student-athlete for reasons of pregnancy.

C. Student-athlete should not be forced to terminate a pregnancy because of financial or psychological pressure or fear of losing their institutional grants-in-aid.

D. NCAA Bylaw 15.3.4.1.(d) states: “voluntary withdrawal may result in loss of financial aid...”:
   a. Pregnant student-athletes should not voluntarily withdraw immediately. They should be counseled on the issues related to pregnancy, participation, eligibility extension and financial aid before making this decision.

E. A student-athlete with a temporary condition is still expected to complete all academic tasks to the best of his/her ability along with other student-athlete obligations. If he/she fails to meet academic and other obligations on a consistent basis, the athletic department and the student-athlete will enter into a contract outlining the responsibilities and expectations of the student-athlete for the renewal of athletics aid the following year.

F. No athletic department personnel will publicly release personally identifiable health information about pregnancy without written, timely authorization from the student-athlete.