

AC Flowchart for Determining the Appropriateness of Body Composition Change

A player, coach or SSSM staff member identifies that modification of the players body composition could be considered for performance or health-related factors.

Step 1: Is the process being clinically led by an AC Sports Dietitian?

The AC Sports Dietitian should be notified and they then facilitate a collaborative approach to decision making around this request.

Any discussion of the flowchart questions should be inclusive of relevant stakeholders and may include: AC medical officer, the player, coaching staff, relevant SSSM (e.g. physical performance coaches, physiotherapist if injury-related), and PDM staff as appropriate.

- Yes → Proceed to Step 2
- No → Contact the relevant AC Sports Dietitian

Step 2: Is there a clear rationale?

Q. Is there a specific, evidence-informed performance, health, or injury-related reason for changing body composition?

- Yes →  Proceed to Step 3
- No →  Do NOT pursue body composition change (focus on performance behaviours instead)

Step 3: Is this individualised?

Q. Is the rationale specific to the player (role, performance data, injury history), not based on team norms or aesthetics?

- Yes →  Proceed to Step 4
- No →  Reassess rationale (avoid benchmarks and comparisons)

Step 4: Screen for risk factors

Q. Are any of the following present?

- History of disordered eating/eating disorder
- Significant body image concerns
- Signs of REDs or low energy availability
- High-risk personality traits (e.g., perfectionism, low self-esteem)

- Under 18 / still developing
- No →  Proceed to Step 5
- Yes →  Proceed with caution or STOP
 - Consult multidisciplinary team (dietitian, psychologist, doctor)
 - Consider avoiding body composition change

Step 5: Are support systems in place?

Q. Does the athlete have access to:

- AC Sports Dietitian
- AC Medical support
- Psychology support (if needed)
- Yes →  Proceed to Step 6
- No →  Do NOT proceed

Step 6: Is the suggested modification feasible given the player's schedule, living and high-performance environment?

Q. Can this be implemented safely given:

- Travel schedule
- Training and match demands
- Food access and environment
- Yes →  Proceed to Step 7
- No →  Modify plan or do NOT proceed

Step 9: Ethical implementation

Before proceeding, confirm:

- The player consents to a discussion taking place
- The process is not being used directly for selection or contract decisions
- Regular monitoring and follow-up are planned

 Proceed with discussing a body composition modification plan (see **AC Flowchart for Body Composition Modification Strategies**)