

Breakout Session Two**IOWA ROOM**

11:30 AM-12:30 PM

Unintended Consequences of “Healthy” Eating and Exercise Education***SPEAKER: Alison St. Germain MS, RD, LD, CEDS*****Description:**

Healthcare professionals and fitness and wellness enthusiasts routinely discuss nutrition, weight, and exercise with patients/cients in an effort to improve health outcomes. However, common recommendations such as "eat this, not that," "cut carbs," "avoid sugar," "reduce processed foods" or "exercise more" can have unintended consequences, particularly for individuals with existing or undiagnosed eating disorders.

Objectives:

1. Explain common nutrition, weight, and exercise recommendations that may unintentionally reinforce or exacerbate disordered eating behaviors.
2. Recognize signs and symptoms of eating disorders and disordered exercise behaviors that may be overlooked in healthcare settings, including among individuals who do not present as "underweight".
3. Describe the potential psychological, behavioral, and physiological consequences of restrictive nutrition and weight-focused counseling approaches.
4. Apply weight-inclusive, trauma-informed communication strategies that promote health-supportive behaviors while reducing the risk of harm to individuals with existing or undiagnosed eating disorders.

Speaker Bio:

Alison St. Germain is a Registered Dietitian at Student Health and Wellness and the founder of St. Germain Consulting: Redefining Health—Nutrition for ALL Bodies, LLC. With a background in higher education, Alison has dedicated much of her career to teaching and advocating for healthcare without harmful stigma. She is a Certified Eating Disorder Specialist, Certified Intuitive Eating Counselor, and a Health At Every Size® (HAES) Facilitator. Alison is passionate about promoting diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible care. Alison regularly presents on weight bias and best practices for supporting individuals in a compassionate and stigma-free way. Her personal experience as a mother of two daughters fuels her commitment to weight inclusivity, anti-diet approaches, and raising awareness about eating disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery.