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Re-injury Anxiety & Return-to-Sport Outcomes in College Students

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Introduction

When athletes are injured, they are faced with the initial injury stage, physical therapy, rehabilitation, and then the return-to-sport. When athletes have a negative outlook, they are less likely to recover from the injury at the proposed date of return-to-sport, take a longer span of time to recover, and have higher levels of stress and anxiety. Wadey, Podlog, all, amson-Stein,icks-little, &ammer, (2011) examined the dimensions of reinjury anxiety and found athletes with greater reinjury anxiety were in denial of the severity of their injury by wishing things would get better and had a greater focus on their distress. Significant indirect effects for coping were found for wishful thinking, venting of emotions, denial, and behavioral disengagement (Wadey et al., 2011). The purpose of the present study is to examine reinjury anxiety and return-to-sport outcomes within college students. Participants (n = 37) solicited from Dominican University of California will be sent an email containing the Reinjury Anxiety Inventory (Walker, Thatcher & Lavallee, 2010), the Return to Sport After Serious Injury questionnaire (Podlog & Eklund, 2005) and demographic items including type of injury and sport. These questionnaires measure the level of reinjury anxiety and if the perspective of the injury is positive or negative.

Methods

Participants

There were 37 student athletes (22 females & 15 males) recruited from Dominican University of California athletics: 15 soccer, 4 basketball, 1 hockey, 4 cross-country, 2 lacrosse, & 5 volleyball.

Survey

Survey was completed on surveymonkey.com

Demographics: age, sport, injury, length of injury, how long doctor/trainer said athlete would be sidelined from sport, reinjury anxiety inventory (RIAI): 28-items; scale scored from 0 (Not at all) to 3 (Very much so) (Wadey et al., 2014)

Return to Sport After Serious Injury questionnaire (RSSIQ): 15-items; the scale scored from 1 (Highly Disagree) to 7 (Highly Agree) (Podlog & Eklund, 2005)

Procedure

Participants were sent an email containing the survey.

Survey started with instructions on how to conduct the survey.

Survey took 15-20 minutes to complete.

Survey finished with a Thank You Page for the participant volunteering for the study.

Results

Table 1. Injury length Predicted by Athletic Trainer/Doctor

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injury</th>
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<th>Return Concerns</th>
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Table 2. Actual Injury length

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Conclusions

- Those with greater reinjury anxiety were athletes with current injuries but it did not correlate to how long they were kept out of their sport due to anxiety.
- Most athletes experienced the most anxiety within rehabilitation of their current injury than in the return to their individual sport.
- We can help athletes by reducing reinjury anxiety in the rehabilitation stage by using coping strategies and visualization techniques. There is a need to focus on psychological health as well as physical health.

Future Directions

- Future research will use more athletes to recruit to participate.
- Future research could also look at reinjury anxiety measures between noncontact and noncontact sport outcomes.

References
