

Physical and Psychological Factors Affecting Sport Performance

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Objectives

- At the end of this lecture the student should :
- Appreciates the physical benefits of sport .
- Understand , the mental and psychological benefits of sport .
- Describe the factors affecting sport performance .
- Understand what is overtraining syndrome .

Benefits of Sport

- Sports are most often played just for fun and having a good time .
- However , it also has other benefits :
 - (1) Promotion of healthy physical development in youth and childhood .
 - (2) improving motor skills .
 - (3) Team sport , particularly in children & youth , improves social interaction skills .
 - (4) Keeping youth busy in the company of good peers engaged in useful hobbies such as sport is likely to keep them away from filling their leisure time with bad and harmful habits such as drugs and alcohol use .

- (5) Increased strength of muscles, tendons and ligaments .
 - (6) Improved joint function .
 - (7) Increased bone density & prevention of osteoporosis in the middle-aged and elderly .
 - (8) Coupled with proper diet , exercise is likely to lower blood cholesterol , promote fat loss , delay development of atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease .
 - (9) May Improve respiratory function .
 - (10) Practising sport usually increases confidence , self-esteem , and creates feelings of well-being .
- However , it is undeniable that sport sometimes carries the risk of physical bodily injuries

Factors Affecting Sport Performance

- **(1) Age**

- **(2) Gender (sex) :**

- (i) Because of difference between genders of in body build and physical ability , men can perform better than women in contact sports such as boxing , rugby and wrestling .
- (ii) Menstruation : women may perform differently at different times during their menstrual cycle .

- **(3) Drugs**

- **(i) Anabolic steroids (Testosterone) :**

- These are used by some athletes (of both sexes) to increase their muscle mass and thereby enhance their physical performance . They have harmful side-effects such as raised blood pressure and increased facial hair in female athletes . Their use in sport competitions is illegal .

- **(ii) Stimulants**

- Stimulants increase reaction speed (i.e., decrease reaction-time) , reduce perception of pain and raise aggression .
- They are highly addictive and have side-effects including high blood pressure, cardiac problems , strokes, and liver disease .

- **(iii) Narcotic analgesics**

- These are pain killers which athletes use to mask pain from an injury or overtraining .
- These are highly addictive and cause withdrawal symptoms when the athlete stops using them.

- **(4) Lack of sleep**
- **(5) Systemic disease**
e.g., bronchial asthma , colds , flu , etc
- **(6) Personality type**
 - **(i) Introverts**
 - tend to like sports which require: , precision , self-motivation , need low arousal levels & Individual performances e.g., archery, golf and snooker
 - **(ii) Extroverts**
 - Prefer team sports, which are exciting , need high arousal level and require large, simple motor skills e.g. rugby and boxing

- **(7) Other psychological factors**

- **(i) Aggression**

- can sometimes be useful and sometimes harmful

- **(ii) Depression and lack of motivation : are always harmful .**

The Overtraining Syndrome

- **With increasing competitiveness in sport throughout the world , overtraining has become common among athletes .**
- **Overtraining occurs when the athlete, while stale (with impaired in vigor and effectiveness) is pushed/forced (e.g. by a coach) to continue training at high intensity**
- **This frequently results in development of “Overtraining Syndrome” ,**
- **Overtraining syndrome is a chronic , debilitating (body-weakening) condition .**

- **Overtraining syndrome may impair an athlete during training or daily work, with signs of**
- **(1) decreased concentration,**
- **(2) increased anger,**
- **(3) slowed mental function, and**
- **(4) diminished self-esteem.**

- Symptoms of overtraining include fatigue (feeling of tiredness) , inability to exceed former levels of performance, and a decreased ability to recover are typical symptoms of overtraining
- Disadvantageous incremental stages of overtraining include
- (a) overreaching, → (b) overtraining, → (c) staleness, → (d) burnout, and → (e) injury/withdrawal
- These conditions are not limited to mature adult athletes.
- Young athletes are continuously confronted with increasing expectations, often resulting in unrealistic demands on time and physical performance
- This may lead to early withdrawal from the sport environment.

- Thanks