E-Poster

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Self-Medication and Parasport: A Study on Adult Amateur Athletes With Motor Disabilities

Topic: Specific Target Groups (Children, Women, Elderly, Athletes, Musicians, Refugees, Ethnic Groups, Workers, and Others)

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BACKGROUND

Limited research has been conducted on self-medication (SM) practices in sports, particularly among amateur athletes with motor disabilities. While SM is prevalent among able-bodied athletes, there is a lack of data on its use among amateur disabled athletes. This study aimed to determine the prevalence of self-medication among amateur sportsmen and women with physical disabilities, identify factors influencing self-medication behaviors, and address misconceptions associated with these practices.

METHODS

Quantitative cross-sectional study conducted using an anonymous online self- administered questionnaire. The study included amateur disabled sportsmen and women from Belgium and France. Self-medication behaviors were assessed for dietary supplements (DS), over-the-counter drugs (OTC), and formerly prescribed drugs (FPD) through self-reported procedures. Data on participant characteristics, sports practice, consumed products, and knowledge were collected. Descriptive statistical analyses, group comparisons, and logistic regressions were performed to assess factors influencing self-medication.

RESULTS

Hundred sixty four disabled sportsmen and women recruited 38.7% of self-medication practices in the context of sports reported (23.2% used DS, and 25.6% used MEDS [OTC and FPD combined]). Self-medication with DS: positively associated with age, consumption of caffeinated and energy drinks, and self-medication with MEDS. Self-medication with MEDS: positively associated with the number of hours of sports practice, consumption of caffeinated drinks, and self-medication with DS. Paracetamol was the most commonly consumed pharmaceutical molecule, while proteins were the most commonly used DS. 36.4% of participants using MEDS and 42.1% using DS believed that self-medication posed no health risks. High prevalence of self-medication among amateur sportsmen and women with physical disabilities. Fortunately, paracetamol, which is one of the most commonly used medications, is generally associated with a low risk of side effects. However, even with this seemingly innocuous medication, recent research has raised concerns about potential safety issues, emphasizing the need for a more cautious approach to usage of any medications. The associated risks, reliance on unreliable sources of advice and information (e.g., the internet), and lack of awareness regarding the dangers of self-medication highlight the need for educational strategies targeting amateur disabled athletes. Further research is required to gain a deeper understanding of self-medication behavior in this population.

CONCLUSION

Self-medication is common among amateur athletes with physical disabilities, with paracetamol being widely used. Despite its low risk, safety concerns exist. Risks include unreliable advice sources and lack of awareness. Educational strategies are needed, and further research is required to better understand self-medication behaviors in this population.

Statement of Disclosures

None

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