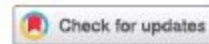


ORIGINAL RESEARCH



Return to competition after anterior cruciate ligament injuries in world class judoka

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: The purpose of this study was to quantify how the return to competition after an anterior cruciate ligament rupture in Judo is perceived by athletes as compared to doctors and physiotherapists. Is there a difference between the perspectives of doctors and physiotherapists and athletes regarding surgery, time loss due to injury, or the level of performance after the injury? Which functional tests are used to define when or if athletes are ready for the return to competition?

Methods: A survey-based retrospective study design with two surveys regarding the treatment methods of an anterior cruciate ligament rupture was established: one version for athletes and one for doctors and physiotherapists. Surveys were equivalent for both populations despite the athletes' individual data. Variance analysis was applied to assess if statistically meaningful differences exist between the two groups.

Results: From 232 judoka interviewed during the Junior World Judo Championships 2017, 23 suffered an anterior cruciate ligament rupture in the last 2 years. As high as 52% underwent surgery. According to doctors and physiotherapists, 82% of athletes underwent reconstructive surgeries. Athletes returned to competition after 5.5 months, whereas doctors and physiotherapists assumed a time loss of 8.4 months. Only 44% of the doctors and physiotherapists used functional tests like hop tests for defining return to competition and 22% used mental tests. When asking athletes, the use of hop tests (8%) and mental tests (0%) was even lower.

Conclusion: The study demonstrated for the first time significant discrepancies between the medical treatment regarding the recommendations of doctors and physiotherapists compared to athletes behavior. To support a conclusive statement, we should encourage the doctors and physiotherapists to use functional test batteries for the decision-making process regarding return to competition.

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