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Version of item: Abstract

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The meaning of athletic injury and re-injury anxiety assessment and intervention.

Given the volume and severity of injuries that occur in sport, the quest for continued knowledge about maximizing athletes' psychological recovery and hastening their return is a work in progress. This presentation will outline research in the field of re-injury anxiety conducted on samples of injured athletes in the UK. It will outline the use of Phenomenological interviews to explore the lived in experience throughout rehabilitation and including the return to training/competition. One salient response noted to injury is that of re-injury anxiety and/or fear of re-injury. Anecdotal reports suggest that re-injury anxieties/fears have a detrimental effect on rehabilitation, increases the likelihood of re-injury, and debilitates performance in rehabilitation and on the return to training/competition. Given these potential implications it is important to be able to measure this construct. This presentation will summarize the conceptual debate in this area and discuss work to date on developing a conceptually and psychometrically valid and reliable measure of re-injury anxiety that can be utilised in both research and applied contexts. Whilst strategies for measuring re-injury anxiety are reviewed, interventions to reduce re-injury anxieties are also discussed. Specifically the natural history of re-injury anxiety over the course of rehabilitation and return to training/competition will be summarized to provide an outline of this little understood construct. The usefulness of psychological interventions for reducing re-injury anxieties will be outlined with an agenda for future research on re-injury anxiety being discussed. Implications of this line of inquiry for the researcher, the professional practice of sport psychology consultants, and sports medicine practitioners are discussed.