Gender differences in injuries sustained during United States Marine Corps training

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Poster Presentations Saturday Lunchtime, Exhibition Hall, October 7, 2023, 12:50 PM - 1:32 PM

Aim: To investigate gender-specific differences in injuries in United States Marine Corps (USMC) trainees.

Design: Retrospective cohort study.

Method: Point-of-care injury data for USMC recruits (females=94; males=681) completing training were drawn from the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego sports medicine injury database and analysed descriptively. The male: female incidence rate ratio (IRR) was calculated.

Results: Male trainees suffered more injuries (male=268; 39%; female n=22; 23%; IRR=1.68 (95% CI 1.33 to 2.1)). Sprains and strains were the leading nature of injury (female=41%; male=25%) followed by pain (female=23%; male=22%). The leading type of injury was 'new overuse injuries' for both genders (54% each). Female trainees experienced more acute injuries (36% versus 26%). While female (55%) and male (58%) rates of 'moderate' injuries were similar, female trainees experienced more 'mild' injuries (36% versus 25%). The knee (female=27%: male=23%) and lower leg (female=23%: male=21%) were the leading injury sites. All injuries were to the lower limbs in female trainees; male trainees also reported injuries to the upper limb (12%) and trunk (8%).

Conclusion: Female trainees experienced fewer injuries than male trainees, with more being mild. Both genders had similar natures of injuries in similar body sites except that male trainees reported some upper body and trunk injuries.

Key Practice Points:

- Sprains and strains to the lower limbs of mild to moderate severity are highly prevalent in USMC trainees; profiles well in the scope for physiotherapy treatments and interventions.
- New overuse injuries are problematic to both genders and mitigation strategies are needed.