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ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION IN ATHLETES

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Anxiety is an emotion that is inherent in all people regardless of gender, age, nationality, profession, etc. There are types of human activity that are accompanied by an increased level of anxiety. In particular, it is a sports activity in which the athlete is constantly waiting for the result of his work. The effectiveness of sports is very important for self-esteem, motivation of the athlete's behavior and, even, to some extent, for the meaning of his activities and life in general.

All athletes, regardless of kind of sport, qualification, athletic performance may experience state anxiety. It is important to assess, justify the anxiety, its duration, intensity and strength of impact on the quality of life of the athlete.

The real or perceived threat causes a state of physiological anxiety. In the case of chronic fear, excessive attention to events or circumstances that cause concern, focusing on them may indicate that anxiety has developed into a pathological form and is already a manifestation of anxiety disorder. People with anxiety disorders are constantly experiencing anxiety, fear. People without anxiety disorders in similar situations feel free and comfortable.

There are emotional, behavioral and physiological symptoms of anxiety disorder [1, p. 25–26].

The athlete himself may be unaware of having anxiety disorder, although he is experiencing a state of discomfort. The athlete does not always mention this state, hoping that it will pass after competitions, hard training, a certain period of sports training, etc. [3].

Chronic experiences such as sadness, fear, anxiety and irritation can develop depression. Depression is also a mental health disorder that interferes with a person's physical and psychological well-being [2].

The specifics of sports activities, as well as the individual characteristics of the athlete can cause risks of occurrence of not only anxiety disorders, but also depressive states. It is important to detect such health problems in athletes in a timely manner.

In order to help athletes understand their psychophysical condition in terms of trait anxiety and depression, we conducted research using certain generally accepted techniques.

We studied the expression of anxiety syndrome using the following technique: Hamilton's anxiety scale (HARS) (Hamilton M., 1960), which is an important and convenient diagnostic tool used in everyday practice by specialists. The technique allows to quantify the expression of anxiety disorders in a wide range.

The Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) (Zigmond A.S. & Snaith R.P., 1983) is a convenient technique for the initial detection and assessment of the severity of symptoms of depression and anxiety. It is a recognized tool for self-assessment. The method contains two parts (subscale A – "anxiety" – determining the level of anxiety, subscale B – "depression" – determining the level of depression).

These methods (questionnaires) were offered to 50 male athletes aged 19-25 years, who are engaged in such sports as soccer (16), boxing (18), wrestling (16).

The research obtained the following data. First, none of the studied athletes demonstrated the norm at the same time for all three indicators, which is quite important.

The results of research using the HARS method: in 30% of cases no anxiety was detected (15 athletes, including 6 soccer players, 6 wrestlers and 3 boxers), 50% may have anxiety disorders (25 athletes, including 8 soccer players, 8 wrestlers and 9 boxers), and 20% were found to have trait anxiety (10 athletes, including 2 soccer players, 2 wrestlers and 6 boxers).

The highest number of athletes with signs of trait anxiety was found among boxers; almost equal amount – among soccer players and wrestlers.

The results of research using the HADS method: 50% – no depression (25 athletes, including 8 soccer players, 9 wrestlers and 8 boxers), 30% – subclinical depression (15 athletes, including 5 soccer players, 5 wrestlers

and 5 boxers) and 20% – clinically severe depression (10 athletes, including – 3 soccer players, 2 wrestlers and 5 boxers).

The most severe (subclinically and clinically) depressive state in the subjects (50%) is among boxers and soccer players.

So, it is very important to detect the presence of anxiety and depression in athletes, to determine their level. But, of course, this is not enough to improve the well-being of the athlete, and to improve the effectiveness of one's activities. It is necessary to identify the causes of such conditions. Anxiety and depression arise against the background of personal characteristics, experience of trauma, chronic failures, conflicts with the coach, dissatisfaction with their physical shape and physique, and so on. Athletes, who took part in the research, study in institutions of higher education, which is additional stress during training, exams, communication with teachers and other students, etc.

Further research will focus on identifying individual causes of anxiety and depression in athletes.

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