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Original Research

Recent Injury and Health-Related Quality of Life in Adolescent Athletes

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Abstract

Context: Health-related quality of life (HRQOL) is a global concept that takes into account the physical, psychological, and social domains of health. Determining the extent to which injury affects HRQOL is an important aspect of rehabilitation practice, enabling comparisons of clinical outcomes across different conditions in diverse patient groups.

Objective: To examine the extent to which a self-reported recent injury affected HRQOL in adolescent athletes using 2 generic patient self-report scales.

Design: Cross-sectional study.

Setting: High school classrooms and athletic training facilities.

Patients or Other Participants: A convenience sample of uninjured (n = 160) and injured (n = 45) adolescent athletes.

Intervention(s): The independent variable was injury status: uninjured versus injured. All participants completed a self-administered brief health status questionnaire and the Short Form-36 Health Survey Questionnaire (SF-36) and Pediatric Outcomes Data Collection Instrument (PODCI) in a counterbalanced manner.

Main Outcome Measure(s): Dependent variables included 8 subscale and 2 composite scores of the SF-36 and 5 subscale scores and 1 global score of the PODCI. Group differences were assessed with the Mann-Whitney *U* test ($P \leq .05$) and reported as median and interquartile range.

Results: On the SF-36, the injured group demonstrated lower scores ($P < .008$) for physical functioning, limitations due to physical health problems, bodily pain, social functioning, and the physical composite. On the PODCI, the injured group reported lower scores ($P < .01$) on the pain and comfort subscale and the global score.

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Conclusions: Adolescent athletes with self-reported injuries demonstrated lower HRQOL than their uninjured peers. As expected, recent injury affected physical functioning and pain. Social functioning (on the SF-36) and global HRQOL (on the PODCI) also decreased, suggesting that injuries affected areas beyond the expected physical component of health. Clinicians need to recognize the full spectrum of negative influences that injuries may have on HRQOL in adolescent athletes.

Keywords: [patient-oriented evidence](#), [POEM](#), [clinical outcomes](#), [children](#)

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