

Lower symptoms of disordered eating behaviour and depression in national team gymnasts compared to healthy controls.

Melin AK¹, Niklas Forsberg, Klara Edlund^{2,3}

¹Institute of Sport Science, Linneus University, Sweden,

²Musculoskeletal & Sports Injury Epidemiology Center, Department of Health Promotion Science, Sophia hemmet University, Stockholm, Sweden

³Unit of Intervention and Implementation Research for Worker Health, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden

Aim: To investigate disordered eating behaviour (DE) compulsive exercise (CE), depression and among elite gymnasts and healthy controls.

Method: Swedish national team gymnasts (team gymnastics n=53; individual disciplines n=41, 19 ±4 yrs.) and controls (n=159, 18 ±4 yrs.) were recruited. The participants filled out the Eating Disorder Inventory (EDI) including subscales Drive for Thinness (DT), Body Dissatisfaction (BD) and Bulimia, the Compulsive Exercise test (CET), and Montgomery Åsberg Depression Rating Scale-Self.

Results: Gymnasts were less likely to have high EDI total score [OR 0.33, 95% CI (0.13-0.84)] and moderate or severe depression [OR 0.31, 95% CI (0.12 - 0.77)] vs. controls. Team gymnasts were more likely to report high CET score [OR 4.12, 95% CI (1.09 – 15.59)] vs. gymnasts in individual disciplines, where 13 vs. 3 had high CET score (p=?). Among gymnasts, total CET score was positively associated with EDI total score (r=0.52, p<0.001), and depression score (r=0.25, p=0.014).

Table 1.

	Gymnasts	Controls	P-value
EDI total score	15.1 ± 13.8	21.4 ± 17.5	0.003
Drive for thinness score	4.7 ± 5.8	6.1 ± 6.9	0.084
Body dissatisfaction score	8.3 ± 6.8	11.6 ± 8.5	0.002
Bulimia score	2.0 ± 3.4	3.6 ± 5.1	0.004
Compulsive Exercise Test	25.1 ± 8.8	22.7 ± 13.1	0.085
Montgomery Åsberg Depression Rating Scale-Self	8.7 ± 6.6	11.8 ± 8.7	0.007



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Conclusion: CE was associated with DE and depression scores, but in this group of healthy national team gymnasts, gymnasts had lower symptoms of DE and depression compared with controls, while gymnasts competing in individual disciplines were less likely to suffer from CE than team gymnasts.