

Manage Anxiety and Inflammation in Combat Game

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ABSTRACT:

Combat sports are competitive activities where two opponents engage in physical combat with the goal of achieving victory. In Combat Games anxiety is a mental status which affects the performance of an athlete due to individual or due to competition stress, inflammation increases muscle tension & affect coordination, too much tension can affect the difficulties as it may affects attention. Every athlete experiences the Anxiety during/before the competition, there is no doubt that some kind of worry is important to perform well but the amount of anxiety is greater than your mind will be full of negative thoughts & due to expectation of failure athletes' performance will be surely get effected, athlete participating in an individual sports experience more anxiety rather than team sports. Inflammation can affect the performance in many ways, there are several theories as to how stress affect the performance i.e. Drive Theory, inverted you Hypothesis, Individual Zones of Optimal Functioning, Multidimensional anxiety theory, Catastrophe Model, Reversal Theory, Anxiety direction and intensity etc. there are three signs of inflammation & anxiety that is cognitive, somatic & behavioural, its influence can be known by its various symptoms. However, there are many ways/techniques to control the anxiety i.e. The five-breath technique, Benson's relaxation response, Visualization, Goal Setting, Relaxation Techniques, Cognitive Restructuring, Develop Self-Confidence, Distract Yourself, Focus on That Which You Can Control etc. by following these techniques athletes may get rid from the

inflammation /anxiety & increase their performance, this paper contains all the details related to anxiety & methods to control over the anxiety.

KEYWORDS:

Anxiety, Combat, MMA, Kungfu.

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Introduction:

Combat games like Boxing, Taekwondo MMA, Fencing, Muay Thai, Wrestling Karate, & Judo Competition can cause athletes to react both physically (somatic) and mentally (cognitive) in a manner which can negatively affect their performance abilities. Stress, inflammation and anxiety are terms used to describe this condition. The major problem in competition is letting your mind work against you rather than for you. You must accept anxiety symptoms as part and parcel of the competition experience; only then will anxiety begin to facilitate your performance. The relationship between anxiety and athletic performance. Anxiety before or during athletic competitions can hinder your performance as an athlete. The coordinated movement required by athletic events becomes increasingly difficult when your body is in a tense state. A certain level of physical inflammation is helpful and prepares us for competition. But when the physical symptoms of anxiety are too great, they may seriously interfere with your ability to compete. Similarly, a certain amount of worry about how you perform can be helpful in competition, but severe cognitive symptoms of anxiety such as negative thought patterns and expectations of failure can bring about a self-fulfilling prophecy. If there is a substantial difference between how you per-

form during practice and how you do during competitions, anxiety may be affecting your performance. Factors influence the effect of anxiety on athletic performance? Some types of athletes are more prone towards anxiety mostly it feels by the amateur athletes rather than professionals it may due to their playing experience. Athletes who participate in individual sports have also been found to experience more anxiety than those who play team sports. Common sense suggests that being part of a team alleviates some of the pressure experienced by those who compete alone. Finally, there is evidence that in team sports, when a team plays at the venue of the opposition (known as an “away” game) anxiety levels tend to be higher than when playing at home. Again, common sense would indicate that having greater fan support and more familiarity with the venue plays a role in anxiety levels during competition. Inflammation can affect performance in many ways. There are several theories as to how stress affects performance.

These are summarized in the following:

I) Drive Theory: Drive theory states that the more inflammation and anxiety an individual experiences, the higher their performance will be.

II) Inverted U Hypothesis: This theory posits that there is a medium amount of inflammation and anxiety that causes one to perform higher - too little anxiety/inflammation and too much anxiety/inflammation will cause performance to be poorer.

III) Individual Zones of Optimal Functioning: This theory takes into account that people have different levels of anxiety and inflammation that are unique in making them per-

form at their best. Some people perform their best with low anxiety, some with a medium amount and others with a high amount. The amount of anxiety/inflammation that an individual requires to perform their best is based on individual characteristics.

IV) Multidimensional anxiety theory: This theory of anxiety posits that when one has anxious thoughts - they will have poorer performance. Anxiety felt by the body will have an effect on performance much like that of the inverted theory (see above). However, there is little support for this theory.

V) Catastrophe Model: The catastrophe model posits that as long as there are lower thoughts of anxiety, then performance will be best at a medium level of physical inflammation. If there is a high level of anxious thoughts (worry), performance will be better at a medium level of physical inflammation but will suddenly drop off and become very poor. There is a breaking point when performance decreases dramatically.

VI) Reversal Theory: This theory posits that the way that inflammation affects performance depends on an individual's interpretation of their inflammation. Inflammation can be interpreted as pleasant and exciting and as unpleasant and anxious. Inflammation that is thought to be pleasant helps performance, and vice versa for bad inflammation.

VII) Anxiety direction and intensity: This theory states that how someone sees their own anxiety is important for understanding the relationship of their anxiety to their performance. Both the person's interpretation of the intensity (how much anxiety) and the direction (whether the anxiety is help-

ing or hindering their performance) have to be considered. Therefore, viewing anxiety as helpful leads to better performance.

Why Does Inflammation, influence Performance:

You may be wondering what it is exactly about inflammation that is affecting performance. Inflammation increases muscle tension and affects co-ordination. Too much tension can create difficulties. As well, it affects attention. However, attention can become too narrow with too much inflammation, and can make one pay attention to too much in their environment when there is too little inflammation.

Signs of Inflammation and Anxiety: There are three levels to recognize the anxiety (Karageorphis 2007); Cognitive- by particular thought process. Somatic- by physical response. Behavioural- by patterns of behaviour. Cognitive Somatic Behavioural Indecision Sense of confusion Feeling heavy Negative thoughts Poor concentration Irritability Fear Forgetfulness Loss of confidence Images of failure Defeatist self-talk Feeling rushed Feeling weak Constant dissatisfaction Unable to take instructions Thoughts of avoidance Increased blood pressure Pounding heart increased respiration rate Sweating Clammy hands and feet Butterflies in the stomach Adrenaline surge Dry mouth Need to urinate Muscular tension Tightness in neck and shoulders Trembling Incessant talking Blushing Pacing up and down Distorted vision Twitching Yawning Voice distortion Nausea Vomiting Diarrhoea Loss of appetite Sleeplessness Loss of libido Biting fingernails Lethargic movements Inhibited posture Playing safe Going through the motions Introversion Uncharacteristic displays of extroversion Fidgeting Avoidance of eye contact Covering face

with hand

Methods to control Anxiety: As we can see anxiety includes state and trait dimensions both of which can show themselves as cognitive and somatic symptoms. An athlete with high anxiety trait is likely to be more anxious in stressful situations. To help the athlete control competitive anxiety somatic techniques (relaxation) and cognitive techniques (mental imagery) can be used. The five-breath technique. This exercise can be performed while you are standing up, lying down or sitting upright. You should inhale slowly, deeply and evenly through your nose, and exhale gently through your mouth as though flickering, but not extinguishing, the flame of a candle (Karageorghis 2007): (e) Take a deep breath and allow your face and neck to relax as you breathe out (f) Take a second deep breath and allow your shoulders and arms to relax as you breathe out (g) Take a third deep breath and allow your chest, stomach and back to relax as you breathe out (h) Take a fourth deep breath and allow your legs and feet to relax as you breathe out (i) Take a fifth deep breath and allow your whole body to relax as you breathe out (j) Continue to breathe deeply for as long as you need to, and each time you breathe out say the word ‘relax’ in your mind’s ear Benson’s relaxation response Benson’s technique is a form of meditation that can be used to attain quite a deep sense of relaxation and can be ideal for staying calm in between rounds of a competition. It can be mastered with just a few weeks’ practice and comprises of seven easy steps (Karageorghis 2007): Sit in a comfortable position and adopt a relaxed posture. Pick a short focus word that has significant meaning for you and that you associate with relaxation (e.g. relax, smooth, calm, easy, float, etc.) Slowly close

your eyes. Relax all the muscles in your body. Breathe smoothly and naturally, repeating the focus word. Be passive so that if other thoughts enter your mind, dismiss them with, 'Oh well' and calmly return to the focus word - do not concern yourself with how the process is going. Continue this for 10 to 15 minutes as required.

Visualization Many elite athletes use visualization to improve performance, develop confidence, and manage anxiety. Visualization, also known as imagery or mental rehearsal, involves imagining yourself successfully competing at an athletic event. In order to make visualization work, close your eyes and imagine the physical movements that you would make in order to be successful in competition. Try to imagine yourself in to the game situation, that crowd, that field like you are really there & think how will you react in that situation, try to imagine yourself that you are giving your same performance at that level nothing is distracting you, you can face the situation & give the positive output to win the competition. Keep off the negative thoughts from your mind; try to visualize your best outcome.

Goal Setting Clearly defined goals help to measure success but goals that are too lofty can leave you overwhelmed and unsure of your abilities. Choose goals that are achievable but challenging, and when possible, break tasks down into smaller parts with a series of short-term goals.

Relaxation Techniques Relaxation techniques are helpful for reducing the physical symptoms of anxiety such as an increased heart rate, tense muscles and quick and shallow breathing. These techniques can be used at any time leading up to a performance or competition, and may be particularly helpful when practiced the night before or in the hours preceding an event to help keep nerves at bay.

Two of the most common relaxation techniques are diaphragmatic breathing and progressive muscle relaxation. Cognitive restructuring refers to changing habitual ways of thinking. In the case of anxiety about athletic performance, cognitive restructuring helps you evaluate bodily inflammation differently much in the way that elite athletes channel inflammation into excitement and the ability to rise to the challenge. Changing the way that you think about competitions can also be helpful. Planning to always do your best regardless of how important you think a competition is allows you to attach less significance to major competitions, and in turn reduce anxiety about your performance.

Being aware of your thoughts and feelings is also key to managing the cognitive symptoms of anxiety. Recognizing negative thoughts when they first enter your mind allows you to stop them before they take hold so you can replace them with more positive ones. Develop self-confidence it is hard to imagine yourself confident when you are crumbled under competition pressure. However, you can take specific steps to help increase self-confidence. Focus on past successes instead of failures. Make practice and preparation a priority and continue until you have no doubt left about your ability to succeed. Still having trouble with self-confidence? Remember to visualize. Imagine yourself confidently competing over and over again until that becomes your new reality. Distract yourself try to avoid negative thoughts come in to your mind & try to keep avoid the negative feelings, talk with your teammates, forget about the crowd/situation, read books, listen music whatever helps keep your mind from generating negative thoughts. Focus on that which you can control if you find worrying about

spectators are watching you or other competitors are better than you, remind yourself that these are aspects of the competition that are out of your control. What you can control is your own performance, focus on your game & focus on the things to perform better by implementing better techniques and strategies

Conclusion:

Inflammation /Anxiety level can affect the performance of an athlete but it may be controlled by following techniques to avoid the anxiety. Stress is a common problem in sports and more research is needed in fighting as it further impacts performance. It is recommended that level of anxiety may be reduced by using some methods with proper practicing; also, it depends on person's mental ability to overcome the situation & achieve peak performance.

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