



## **Role of sports in controlling stress**

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### **Abstract**

In this competitive world, everyone wants to succeed in life. Some people get succeed but some fail. Few of failed persons, get depressed. There also some other factors due to which stress is found in people. Some people take the aid of therapy and some take medicines to recover from stress. According to a survey, sport is very healthy option to control stress in human beings. Person suffering from stress can play any sport of his/her interest and feel better. It is better to play a team game so that the person can forget all the bad phase of life and enjoy the spirit of the game. The current article highlights the role of sports in reducing stress.

**Keywords:** Stress, Sports, Game

### **Introduction**

Stress is not good for human beings as it brings various harmful diseases in the human body. Stress may affect the internal system of a person and can harm a person mentally. A mentally disturbed person can not make others happy and considers himself/herself a burden. This phase also affects the career of influenced person.

Many sports activities and exercises are suggested by doctors. It is believed that sports activities benefit a person in a long time and quite helpful for a person to recover from stress. Sport is a team game and if it is played with the spirit of game then it can be helpful.

The theory behind is that when a person plays a team game then that person involves in the game so much that his whole mind gets refreshed and good thoughts have started to rise the mind and all the bad things present in the mind tends to erase slowly.

All the inner functions such as anxiety, blood pressure etc. work efficiently after playing the outdoor game like Football, Volleyball, Handball etc. All these things are very helpful in controlling the stress level.

It is also observed that due to stress, the external body of a person affects and many other diseases attack on that person because the immune system of the infected person gets weaker. Due to mental disturbance, the outer body does not work properly.

It is found that loneliness is the big reason for stress and depression in human beings. Therefore, sports provide many options for an individual to mix-up with others and reduce stress level. During the play, a person gets a chance to meet others and know them well.

There is no age limit for playing games. From a teenager to old man, anyone can play sports and feel good. It is said that school-going children should play outdoor games in order to reduce the education stress.

Due to increase in competition at work places, employees get depressed and their performance tends to decrease. To avoid

these circumstances, many organizations in metro cities arrange a little sports session for employees once in a week to make the balance between work place stress and job satisfaction.

Yoga and meditation are also considered as good options to reduce stress level. It is observed that many national and international players do yoga and meditation exercises so as to avoid the stress. It also helps in improving their performance at national and international stage.

Sports with the combination of some yoga exercises keep the mind relax and players can concentrate on their goal and can achieve the target in a better way. These days, many government programs are running at states and national level to promote sports in human life.

### **How Stress Affects Young Athletes**

Fear and anxiety are unpleasant emotions that most people try to avoid. There is evidence that this is precisely what many stress ridden young athletes do. Avoiding or dropping out of sports is one of the ways some children escape from an activity they find threatening rather than pleasant. Many of them had quit sport programs. A large proportion of these youngsters indicated that they would like to compete but were fearful of performing poorly or of failing to make a team. Stress can thus reduce enjoyment and participation in athletics.

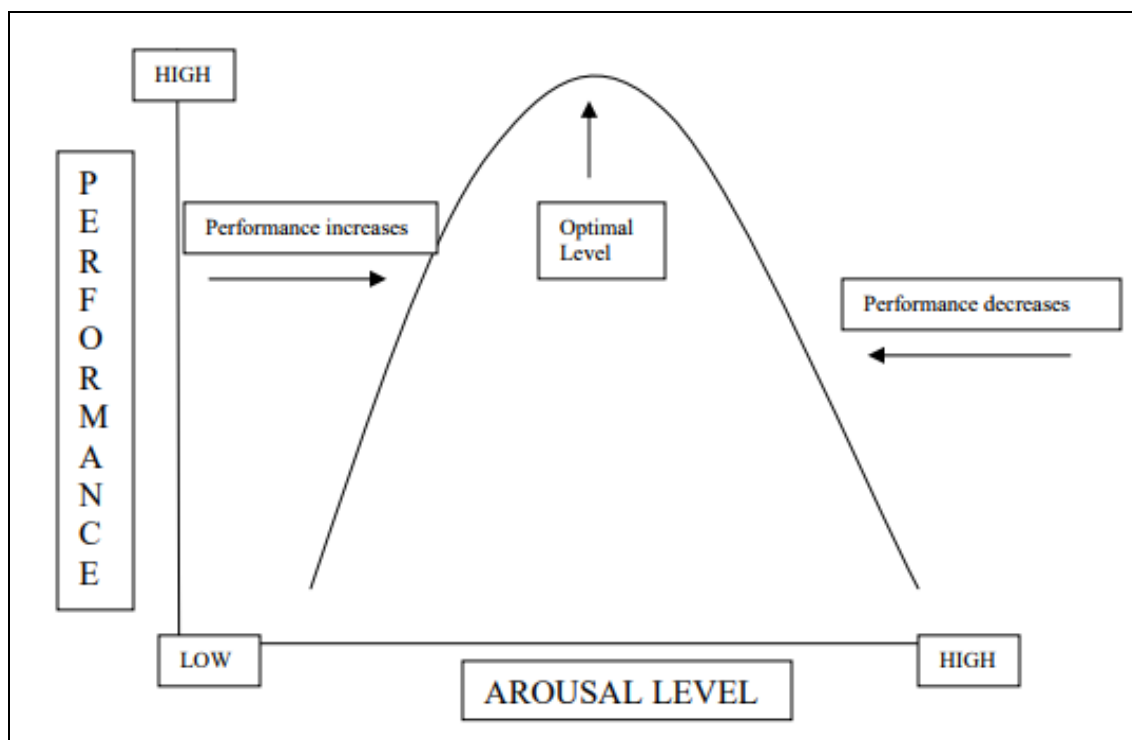
In recent years, the notion of burnout has received increasing attention in sports. Elite athletes and coaches have dropped out of sports at the peak of their careers, maintaining that they are too "burned-out" to continue. Likewise, youth sport authorities have become increasingly concerned about the large numbers of youth who are dropping out of sports during the adolescent years.

While research suggests that in many cases, children drop out because they become more interested in other things, there is also concern that intense competitive pressures and too many sport demands may cause some youngsters to burn out and

abandon sports. Sport burnout is a legitimate concern, since burned out athletes often show depression, loss of drive and energy, and a lowered sense of self-esteem that carries over

into other areas of their lives.

Relationship between Emotional Arousal and Athletic Performance



This relationship takes the form of an upside-down U. When arousal is absent or extremely low, athletes frequently describe themselves as flat and do not perform as well as they are able. As arousal increases, so does performance, but only up to a certain point. Beyond that optimal arousal point at the top of the inverted V, arousal begins to interfere with behavior, and we get a drop-off in performance. Research has also shown that the more complicated or difficult the task, the less arousal it takes to interfere with performance. Thus, it takes less arousal to interfere with a figure skater's or a golfer's performance than with a sprinter's or a weight lifter's. High-stress athletes who cannot control their emotions are likely to experience higher-than-optimal levels of arousal and to perform poorly. The failure experiences that result only serve to reinforce these athletes' fears and undermine their confidence. Thus, a vicious circle involving anxiety, impaired performance, and increased anxiety can result. Many young athletes never succeed in achieving their potential in sports because of their inability to control their anxiety.

**Discussion**

Sport participation places both physical and psychological demands on athletes. From youth leagues to the professional level, athletes are forced to cope with the stresses that arise from competing head-on with others in activities that are important to the athletes and to others, such as parents, coaches, and peers. Some athletes learn to cope successfully with these stresses, and for them sports are enjoyable -and challenging. Others who are unable to cope find sport participation to be a stressful and threatening experience. Before discussing ways of reducing stress, we need to explore

what we mean by stress. An examination of what stress is should give us some clues on how to cope successfully with it. We typically use the term stress in two different but related ways. First, we use the term to refer to situations in our lives that place physical or psychological demands on us. Family conflicts, work pressures, or school problems are examples of events that might cause us to say that "there is a lot of stress in my life right now."

The second way in which we use the term is to refer to our mental, emotional, and behavioral responses to these demanding situations. Worry, anger, tension, or depression are examples of such reactions, as are loss of appetite, sleep difficulties, and inability to get one's mind off the problem. We are referring to such reactions when we say, "I'm feeling a lot of stress right now."

The first element is the external situation that is making some sort of physical or psychological demand on the person. Typically we view our emotions as being directly triggered by these "pressure" situations, as shown in such statements as "He makes me furious when he says that" or "The kids drove me nuts today." This, however, is not the case. The true emotional triggers are not in the external situation; they are in our minds. Situations in and of themselves have no meaning to us until we appraise them, which is the second element of stress. Through the process of appraisal, we perceive and give meaning to situations.

The emotional responses that we call stress are likely to occur when we view ourselves as incapable of coping with a high demand situation that has potentially harmful consequences for us. In response to such appraisals, our body instantaneously mobilizes itself to deal with the emergency,

and we experience physiological arousal, the third element of stress. This inborn fight-or-flight response involves a general arousal of the body. Heart rate increases, blood is rushed to the muscles, blood pressure and muscle tension increase, perspiration may occur, and so on. All of us are familiar with the way our body becomes aroused when we perceive that we are threatened or in danger.

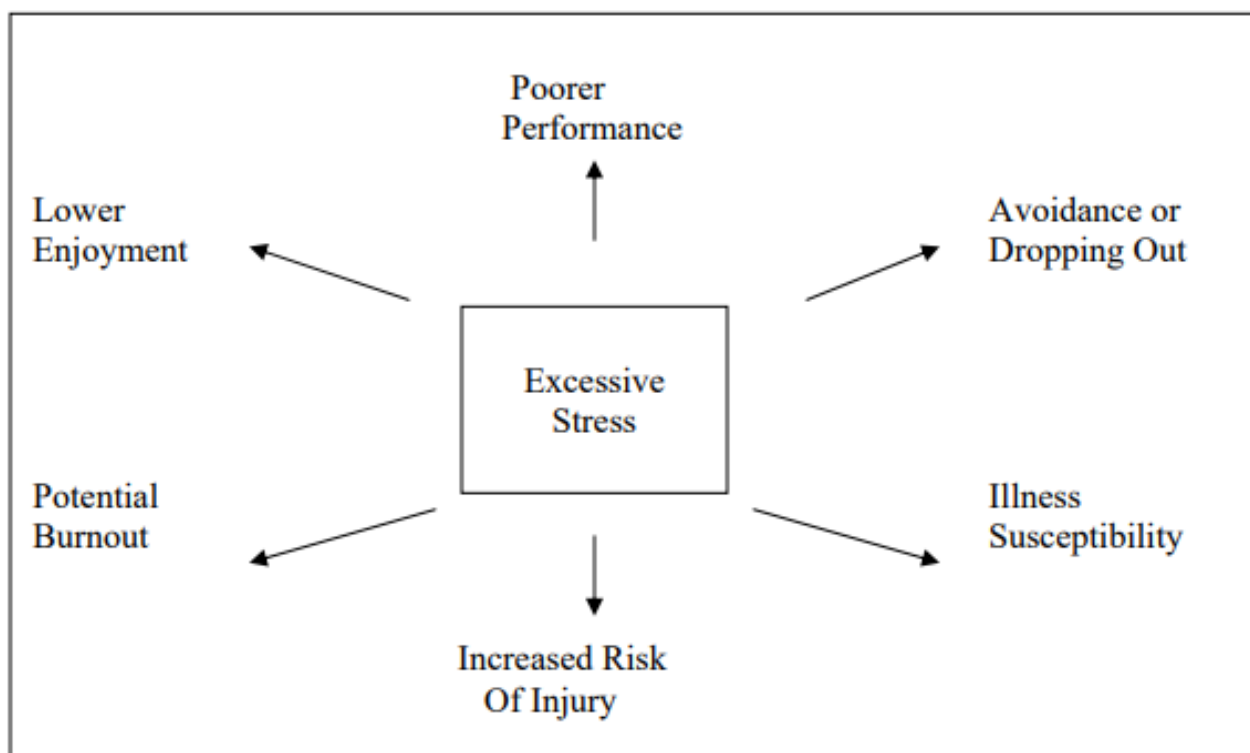
The fourth element in our analysis of stress involves the behaviors that the person uses in order to try to cope with demands of the situation. Responses may be mental, as when a quarterback tries to figure out which play to call, or they may be physical or social responses, such as shooting a free throw or dealing with an angry opponent.

**Significance of The Study**

One other effect of stress should be noted. There is mounting medical evidence that high levels of chronic stress can impair health. The physical nature of the stress response taxes the

resources of the body and appears to make children and adults alike more susceptible to illness and disease. Sports medicine specialists have observed many cases of health breakdowns of various sorts among highly stressed children. Not long ago, we saw a twelve year-old competitive figure skater who was experiencing so much stress related to her sport that she developed an ulcer.

Stress affects physical well-being in yet another way: Studies of both college and high school athletes show that stressful life changes are related to an increased likelihood of injury. Sports medicine specialists have also observed that athletes who find participation to be stressful and unpleasant often appear to take longer to recover from injuries. It may be that in some cases, an athlete finds in an injury a temporary and legitimate haven from the stresses of competition.



One of the highest compliments that can be paid to an athlete is to be labeled mentally tough. Some coaches and athletes speak of mental toughness as if it were a quality that a person either has or does not have. In reality, however, mental toughness is not something we are born with; rather it is a set of specific, learned attitudes and skills.

The specific skills that constitute what we call mental toughness fall within the brackets of the stress model described above. Mentally tough athletes mentally appraise themselves and pressure situations in ways that arouse a positive desire to achieve rather than a fear of failure. Freedom from the disruptive effects of fear of failure allows them to concentrate on the task instead of worrying about the terrible things that will happen if they fail in the situation.

**Conclusion**

The core of mental toughness is the ability to control emotional responses and concentrate on what has to be done in pressure situations. The mentally tough athlete is in control of his or her emotions and is calm and relaxed under fire. Such athletes do not avoid pressure; they are challenged by it. They are at their best when the pressure is on and the odds are against them. Being put to the test is not a threat but another opportunity to achieve. Mentally tough athletes are able to concentrate on the task at hand in situations where less capable athletes lose their focus of attention. They rarely fall victim to their own or others' self-defeating thoughts and ideas, and they are not easily intimidated. Finally, they are mentally resilient and have the ability to bounce back from adversity, their determination to succeed coming across as a

quiet self-assurance.

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