

Exercise Science

Associations Between Psychological Mood States and Sleep Quality in Collegiate Softball Players

Sponsoring Faculty Member: Dr. Chris Bailey

Mary Kate Nix

Collegiate athletes are put under a wide range of stressors on and off the playing field. As a result, coaches and scientists seem justified in monitoring much more than what occurs on the field or in the weight room. Two areas for potential monitoring are psychological mood states (PSYMS) and sleep quality (SQ). Associations for these two areas in athletes are not known. The purpose of this investigation was to evaluate the relationship between PSYMS and SQ at three different periods of the season. 24 collegiate softball players completed questionnaires deriving subjective measures of soreness, illness, fatigue, PSYMS, and SQ prior to the 1st game (G1), mid-season (mid), and conference tournament (fin). Relationships between PSYMS variables and SQ variables were evaluated with Spearman correlation coefficients and statistical significance was set at $p \leq 0.05$. At G1, restless sleep moderately correlated with nervousness ($r_s = 0.451$, $p = 0.027$). At mid, difficulty to sleep was moderately to strongly related to helplessness ($r_s = 0.440$, $p = 0.039$) and fatigue ($r_s = 0.568$, $p = 0.005$) and premature awakening was moderately related to fatigue ($r_s = 0.419$, $p = 0.050$). At fin, difficulty to sleep was strongly correlated to fatigue ($r_s = 0.547$, $p = 0.007$), restless sleep was moderately correlated to fatigue ($r_s = 0.424$, $p = 0.044$) and cheerfulness ($r_s = -0.436$, $p = 0.037$). Based on the findings of the study, relationships between PSYMS and SQ are present; specifically, decreases in SQ are associated with negative PSYMS. Some relationships increased in strength towards the end of the season, possibly due to decreases in SQ or increased stressors. This trend was not present in every situation, thus further research is required to justify this notion.