

Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice on First Aid and Safety Measures Regarding Sports-Related Injuries Among Sportsmen and Women in University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

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Sports injuries can occur unexpectedly and negatively affect an athlete's performance and overall health. Awareness of proper first-aid techniques and safety measures is crucial for minimizing the severity of injuries and avoiding complications. This study aimed to assess the knowledge, attitude, and practice on first aid and safety measures regarding sports-related injuries, and to identify demographic factors determining knowledge, attitude, and practice on first aid and safety measures regarding sports-related injuries among sportsmen and women at the University of Peradeniya. A quantitative cross-sectional study was conducted among athletes of the sports teams at the University of Peradeniya using a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire. Based on previous literature, the knowledge and practice total score was converted into percentages and categorized as " $\leq 49\%$ = Poor", " $50\% - 70\%$ = Adequate/Satisfactory", and " ≥ 71 = Good". Each statement in the attitude section was scored on the Likert scale, and the total score was converted into percentages and categorized as " $0-49\%$ =Negative attitude" and " $50\%-100\%$ =Positive attitude". Data are presented as mean score $\pm$ standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages. Out of 442 participants, 63.8% were males. Sports injuries were reported by 65.6%, and 62% had no first-aid training. Overall knowledge and practice were poor in 52.5% and 69% of athletes, respectively. However, 98.87% showed a positive attitude toward first aid and safety. Athletes from medicine-related faculties had better knowledge ($60.00 \pm 21.32\%$, $p < 0.001$) compared to other science-based faculties, ($46.90 \pm 18.96\%$), and non-science-based faculties, ($43.64 \pm 20.45\%$). Additionally, receiving first-aid training and both knowledge and practice in first-aid and safety measures showed significant positive associations ($p < 0.05$). No significant associations were observed between gender and knowledge, attitude, or practices ($p > 0.05$). These findings indicate that overall knowledge and practice in first aid and safety measures were poor, while attitude was positive among sportsmen and women at the University of Peradeniya. Therefore, awareness and skill enhancement programs on first aid and safety measures regarding sports-related injuries for university athletes are needed.

Keywords: University athletes, sports injuries, injury prevention