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Evaluation of injuries in cheerleaders in Singapore**Jade Nicolette Chee Zhenhui**

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Introduction: Cheerleading injuries in the United States have been increasing steadily over the past few decades. The number of catastrophic injuries related to cheerleading has increased from 1.5 per year from 1982 to 1992 to 4.8 per year from 2003 to 2009. A detailed study with 9022 US cheerleaders from 412 teams was performed in 2009. Till date, no similar studies have been conducted to evaluate the rate, types and mechanisms involved in injuries sustained by the varsity cheerleading population in Singapore. This study evaluates injury statistics amongst our local Varsity cheerleading population, collating incidence of cheerleading injuries, and thereafter deriving methods to decrease the number and severity of injuries amongst Varsity cheerleaders in Singapore.

Methods: A total of 111 cheerleaders across 5 local cheerleading teams were recruited from 5 teams across Polytechnic, University, and Open teams which participated in the 2017 National Cheerleading Championships in Singapore. Participant exposure and injury data were collected. Results were analyzed using SPSS, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: 76 (68.5%) cheerleaders described having sustained injuries from cheerleading. Of which, 66 (86.8%) sustained their injuries during cheerleading practice, while 10 (13.2%) were injured during cheerleading competitions. The most common mechanism of injury was from falling from a stunt (26.8%). Other mechanisms with high prevalence were injuries sustained while tumbling (18.3%), while basing (15.5%), as well as injuries which resulted from slipping/tripping/twisting a body part (15.5%). In particular, most injuries resulted from attempting pyramids (31.6%), running tumbling (26.3%) and partner stunts (22.8%). Sprains and/or tears constituted the highest number of injuries amongst respondents (57.7%) who sought medical attention.

Conclusion: The injury profile of cheerleaders in Singapore is similar to that in the US cheerleading population, with studies reporting that most US cheerleading injuries occurred during gymnastics maneuvers and partner stunts, and that partner stunts had been associated with the most catastrophic types of injuries. Guidelines for cheerleading coaching and practices in Singapore should be stepped up, and more targeted injury prevention strategies should be incorporated amongst our local cheerleading population to make cheerleading a safer sport in Singapore.

Biography

Jade Nicolette Chee Zhenhui has completed her Graduation from the National University of Singapore with a Bachelor's of Medicine and Surgery (MBBS) in 2012 and is currently pursuing her Family Medicine Residency Training. She has a keen interest in Sports Medicine, a specialty she is hoping to pursue in time to come.

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