Descriptive Epidemiology of Musculoskeletal Injuries in Naval Special Warfare Personnel

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

Injury prevention is of utmost importance in the Naval Special Warfare (NSW) population. The first step in the Public Health Model as applied to injury prevention is measuring the burden of injuries in the population of interest. Previous studies examining musculoskeletal injuries in NSW personnel have utilized either medical chart review (MCR) or self-report (SR), but not both. MCRs only include those injuries for which medical care was sought. SR injuries are prone to underreporting with lack of recollection, especially as time historically increases. Using both methods provides further detail of the injury burden. The purpose of this study was: 1) to describe both MCR and SR musculoskeletal injuries sustained among NSW personnel during a 1-year period, and 2) to determine if MCR and SR injury data can be integrated for a more comprehensive understanding of musculoskeletal injuries sustained among NSW personnel.

METHODS

Two hundred thirty-five subjects volunteered; medical charts were available and reviewed for 108 subjects, and injury self-reports were obtained from 226 subjects. Injuries per subject were described using relative frequency (percent). Description of injuries included calculation of injury percent in each category.

RESULTS

The NSW personnel who participated in this study experienced a significant risk of musculoskeletal injuries, especially those affecting the extremities. Further investigation into the risk factors for these injuries is necessary. There may be a need for a customized injury prevention and performance optimization program in this NSW population.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

• The NSW personnel who participated in this study experienced a significant risk of musculoskeletal injuries, especially those affecting the extremities. Further investigation into the risk factors for these injuries is necessary.

• There may be a need for a customized injury prevention and performance optimization program in this NSW population.

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