RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTIONS HAMPER TRAINING AND COMPETING IN FINNISH CROSS-COUNTRY SKIERS

Mäki-Heikkilä Rikhard¹, Karjalainen Jussi^{1,2}, Parkkari Jari^{3,5}, Valtonen Maarit⁴, Lehtimäki Lauri^{1,2}









Background

Respiratory tract infections (RTI) are one of the main causes preventing athletes from training and competing. Training during RTI increases risk for major complications and longer breaks from training. The aim of this study was to investigate the burden of illnesses during one season in cross-country skiers.

Methods

All skiers that enrolled in the highest level competition in their age category n = 1282

Postal questionnaires:

1st round May 2019 2nd round June 2019 Response rate 27.4 %

n = 351 mean age 18.6 years (SD 6.1) 58 % women

Results

86 %

Refrained at least once from training due to RTI

66 %

Missed at least once a competition due to illness

48 %

Trained while having common cold

23 %

Competed while having common cold

No notable differences between sexes or between juniors and seniors (cut-off age 16 years)

Association of asthma on training and competing during infections

- 1000 construction of the contraction of the contr			
	Asthma	No asthma	p
Refrained at least once from			
Training due to RTI	91 %	84 %	0.084
Competition due to illness	77 %	62 %	0.011
During common cold			
Training	59 %	53 %	0.391
Competing	28 %	21 %	0.188
Days of absence from training due to illness, days (SD)	19.0 (14.5)	14.7 (13.3)	0.014

Conclusions

- Respiratory tract infections cause a major burden on cross-country skiers and often prevent training and competing
- Skiers with asthma missed competition more often due to illness and had more days of illness
- Proper guidance for the risk of complications and avoiding RTIs in athletes should be considered

rikhard.maki-heikkila@tuni.fi tel. +358415036074 Twitter: @hengitys & @rikhardfi This poster and more information on our research: www.hengitystutkimus.fi/NWSC20



¹Faculty of Medicine and Health Technology, Tampere University, Tampere, Finland; ²Allergy Centre, Tampere University Hospital, Tampere, Finland; ³Tampere Research Center of Sports Medicine, UKK Institute, Tampere, Finland; ⁴KIHU – Research Institute for Olympic Sports, Jyväskylä, Finland, ⁵Tampere University Hospital, Tampere