The Effects of Head or Spine Injury on Willingness to participate in Collegiate Athletics: A Comprehensive Survey
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**Context:** Risk for injury increases substantially when one is focused on the possibility that injury may occur. Despite this fear, many athletes feel pressured to perform. Athletes that return to play after sustaining a head or spine injury may have a higher perceived risk due to the psychological trauma caused by these potentially catastrophic injuries. Understanding the factors associated with willingness to return to play are beneficial in maintaining the health and well-being of the athlete. **Objective:** Determine if willingness to participate in collegiate athletics is affected after sustaining a head or spine injury. **Design:** An exploratory, cross-sectional descriptive analysis on survey data from collegiate athletes. **Setting:** Web based survey. **Patients or Other Participants:** Respondents were 18-25 years of age and participated in varsity or club sports at the time of the study. Subjects sustained a head or spinal injury within six months of distribution of the survey. **Interventions:** The online survey consisted of 33 questions: 10 questions on demographic information, 8 questions about social pressure and support, 5 questions about various types of pain awareness and recognition, 8 questions on perceived risk of injury, and 3 questions about willingness to participate at different intensities of activity. **Main Outcome Measures:** Social Pressure/Support (SPS), Capacity to Perform with Pain (CPWP), Perceived Risk of Injury (PRI), Willingness to Participate in Sports (WTP) **Results:** There was a significant moderately strong negative correlation between PRI and WTP ($r = -.541$, $p < .05$). There was also a significant moderately strong positive correlation between SPS and CPWP ($r = .605$, $p < .05$). The maximum time removed from activity due to injury (regardless of cause) was significantly associated with WTP as well ($\chi^2(12) = 22.01$, $p < .05$, $\Lambda = 13.5$). **Conclusions:** As athletes recognized their risk for injury, they were less willing to return to their sport at the time they were medically cleared to participate. The findings of our study indicate that a survey, such as the WTPSS, can be used clinically to understand the psychological effects of injuries as they relate to return to play. Scores can be used in conjunction with a clinician's impressions in order to determine athletes' psychological readiness as it relates to participation in athletic activity after sustaining an injury.

**Word Count:** 371