

Brief Report

The actual situation of food consciousness for Japanese elite athletes and their eating habits during season periodization

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ABSTRACT

【Aim】

The aim of this study was to make clear the actual consciousness about food among the Japanese elite athletes and their eating habits under seasonal periodization.

【Methods】

The data for this study were collected through the use of a medical interview in questionnaire form. On the question about their food-consciousness, they were asked if they were conscious regarding nutritionally-balanced food: if the answer was “Yes” they were considered as highly conscious athletes (H group), and if the answer was “No” that made them poorly conscious ones (L group). Their eating habits were divided between the time of their training period and for the duration of games or competitions, the answers to the questionnaire were scored on 11 items and evaluation was on a 3-point scale.

【Results】

The results showed the “H” group comprised 1,031 (92.5%) of the athletes and the “L” group of 84 (7.5%) of the athletes. The relevance of the result in this survey showed a statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, the results from the multiple comparisons of both training and participation showed higher scores for the “H” group over both periods than the “L” group. However, the scores were significantly lower during the periods of actual participation compared to the training periods ($p < 0.05$). On the other hand, in the “L” group, no difference in the scoring was seen between both periods.

【Conclusion】

The results demonstrated that those athletes who were highly-conscious about the nutritional values of food had higher scores for their eating habits than the poorly conscious athletes. Furthermore, the eating habits of elite athletes were demonstrated to change both according to their consciousness of nutritional food values and seasonal periodization.

Keywords: elite athlete, food consciousness, eating habit, season periodization