

Practical Solutions

Nutritional Support for a University Men's Rugby Team during Summer Camp in the Pre-season ~An Approach to Preventing Weight Loss Based on the Self- Determination Theory~

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ABSTRACT

【Aim】

Rugby involves frequent collisions among players, so that it is essential to increase the muscle mass and body weight to improve the players' endurance, and nutritional support is one of the key elements. Especially in university rugby, it is considered necessary to provide support to the players to increase their awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition and enable them to voluntarily engage in nutritional management. Based on this background, we implemented a nutritional support program during the pre-season summer camp with the aim of increasing the self-initiative of the players, based on the self-determination theory, for guarding against weight loss.

【Methods】

The support period was 15 days, from August 9 to August 23, 2017. In collaboration with the Strength & Conditioning coach, we monitored the practice times and contents, as well as the amount of activities via GPS. We provided real-time feedback daily on whether they were getting the right amount of nutrition based on their weights and diets. In addition, based on the theory of self-determination, we helped the players establish a habit of measuring their own food intake, developed a supplemental food and water supply plan, and trained them to implement the plan independently.

【Results】

We compared the weights of the athletes on the first and last day of the camp. Twenty-two of the 25 players showed a slight decrease of the body weight. In addition, the coaches and staff appreciated the fact that we encouraged the players to take action to prevent weight loss by providing support based on the self-determination theory.

【Conclusion】

This study indicates that it is difficult for players to sufficiently meet the energy requirements to maintain their body weight throughout the summer camp period. Upcoming issues include changing the contents of the diets by considering the use of fat and planning and adapting the support according to the players' self-initiative.

Keywords: rugby, nutritional support, weight management, college students, self-determination theory