

TOPIC 2nd day: Sport Science Behind Lines: Preparing the soldier—caring for the veteran

TITLE Physical Fitness Tests in Military: Relevance with occupational tasks

AUTHOR Konstantinos Havenetidis

AFFILIATION

Department of Physical and Cultural Education, Hellenic Army Academy, Evelpidon Avenue, 16673, Vari Attiki, GREECE

INTRODUCTION

Military resilience and preparedness require high levels of physical conditioning. The latter comprises various components of fitness such as muscular endurance, body composition, aerobic fitness, muscular strength and flexibility. Therefore, improving scores in these components is considered a necessity for determining health as well as performance in all combat-oriented branches of the military. The aim of this study was to critically assess original research addressing the use of fitness tests in the military.

METHODS

A search of the electronic database PubMed, was carried out for the following key words: Army personnel, Physical fitness, Work Capacity Evaluation, Diagnostic Techniques and Procedures, Norms. This procedure identified randomised clinical trials from journal articles and technical reports related to fitness testing in the military.

RESULTS

Most of the studies suggest that passing in a battery of physical fitness tests, immediately following Basic Combat Training is considered essential, as improving scores in these test items will improve physical conditioning level, a prerequisite for performing future military occupational tasks (Hoyot et al., 2006). Age and gender are also associated with physical impairments in strength, balance, endurance and flexibility leading to modifications in final fitness scores (Havenetidis and Paxinos, 2013). Furthermore, the potential risk of injury cause alterations in the personal effort that each recruit applies during military testing (Hauschild et al., 2014)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study highlighted the relative importance of various components of fitness for each military branch, and demonstrated the reliability and external validity of field and laboratory tests in various military settings.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR CISM

Caution is recommended so that military recruits would not only be evaluated from a health-related and occupationally relevant fitness perspective but also under fair and safe for everyone conditions. Long term improvement in military physical conditioning can be achievable via subsequent functional training.

REFERENCES

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST None

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