

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

DO GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS EXAMINE INJURED RUNNERS?

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ABSTRACT

Background: General Medical Practitioners (GMP) in Denmark perform clinical examinations of patients with musculoskeletal pain. However, the prevalence proportion of examinations caused by running-related injuries remains unknown.

Purpose: The primary purpose of the present study was to estimate the prevalence proportion of consultations in general medical practice caused by running-related injuries. The secondary purpose was to estimate the prevalence proportion of injured runners, who consult their GMP, that are referred to additional examinations or treatments.

Study Design: A survey-based study.

Methods: An online survey was distributed in October and November 2015 to more than 370 GMPs in Denmark and completed by 27.

Results: The median prevalence proportion of consultations caused by running-related injuries in the prior two weeks was 0.80% [25th percentile = 0.00%; 75th percentile = 1.43%]. Ten (37%) GMPs reported to refer between 0-24% of the injured runners to additional examination or treatment, whereas thirteen (48%) of GMPs referred between 25-49% and four (15%) referred 50-74% of injured runners.

Conclusion: Although a very small part (<1%) of the GMPs consultations were related to running injuries, this result suggests that injured runners seek advice in the primary health-care system in Denmark. As a consequence, physiotherapists willing to treat runners with running-related injuries may inform the GMPs in their local community about the treatment possibilities they offer. The low response-proportion highlights the challenges recruiting GMPs willing to respond to questionnaires on running-related injuries. It is plausible to assume that the estimates reported in the present study are overestimated owing to selection bias.

Level of Evidence: 3

Key words: Family medicine, injuries, physiotherapy, running

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