

Collegiate athletes' coping behaviors to deal with stress and anxiety.

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A Synthesis Project

Presented to the

Department of Kinesiology, Sport Studies, and Physical Education

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In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Science in Education (Adapted Physical  
Education)

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by

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Title of Synthesis Project:

Collegiate athletes' coping behaviors to deal with stress and anxiety.

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5/22/24

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Date

Accepted by the Department of Kinesiology, Sport Studies, and Physical Education, The College at Brockport, State University of New York, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Science in Education (Physical Education).

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5/22/24

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Date

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this synthesis project was to review the literature on collegiate athletes' coping behaviors to deal with stress and anxiety. The research shows that there's a big need for better mental health resources that fit the specific needs of athletes. It also points out how important strong support systems are in college sports programs. Many studies found that stress and anxiety are common problems for college athletes, affecting their performance and well-being. This project aims to highlight these findings and push for better mental health support for student-athletes.

## Chapter 1 – Introduction

Stress and anxiety are among the primary reasons college students seek mental health help (Dark-Freudemen et al., 2021). College students face numerous pressures, including academic demands, social challenges, and the transition to independence, which can all contribute to their mental health struggles. Many students seek help to manage these pressures, improve their coping skills, and maintain their overall well-being.

Stress and anxiety are two things that can affect an individual both physically and mentally (Marks, 2023). Stress is a type of demand placed on an individual's brain or body. This is based on any time in a person's life that they are feeling nervous or feel like they are getting frustrated (Marks, 2023). Anxiety differs from stress in that a person may have the feeling of fear or unease, and this can happen without any triggers (Team., 2022). Stress and anxiety are important things to learn about and understand because of how much it affects a person's daily life.

Given these challenges, mindfulness has emerged as a valuable tool for managing stress and anxiety. Mindfulness practices, such as meditation and deep-breathing exercises, help individuals focus on the present moment and develop a greater awareness of their thoughts and feelings. By incorporating mindfulness into their routines, college students can better manage stress and anxiety, leading to improved mental health and well-being. Mindfulness has been referred to as a psychological trait (Dark-Freudemen et al., 2021). State mindfulness occurs in meditation, and trait mindfulness refers to a person's predisposition to be mindful daily. Dispositional mindfulness, also known as trait mindfulness, is a type of awareness that involves paying attention to our thoughts and feelings in the present moment without judgment.

Stress and anxiety affect everyone, but studies show that college represents a highly demanding experience both personally and academically (Sprung, & Rogers, 2020). College can be an incredibly challenging time, especially when it comes to dealing with stress and anxiety. College serves as a pivotal juncture in one's life journey, marking the transition into newfound independence and self-reliance. College is the first time that individuals begin to really struggle and have to figure things out on their own and also, have to learn how to balance everything that is going on (Sprung, & Rogers, 2020). For college students they have a lot that they need to do. For example, they need to focus on their schoolwork, social life, and sometimes work. College athletes have these demands as well as the demands of participating in a sport.

Everyone deals with stress or anxiety no matter how old they are, but the thing that is different for everyone is how they deal with or cope with stress and anxiety. Student-athletes face stress in balancing their sport and other responsibilities and this is what could cause them to cope with stress inappropriately, because of this it could contribute to unhealthy coping behaviors like using alcohol and drugs Knettel (2021). Based on this research it was noted that many student-athletes likely abuse alcohol to cope with stress and anxiety and they experience more alcohol related problems. Such findings underscore the importance of addressing the unique stressors faced by student-athletes and implementing effective support systems to promote healthier coping mechanisms. Fogaca (2021) discussed better ways for athletes to cope with stress and anxiety. They encouraged these student athletes to use people around them to help them talk about what was going on in their lives and how it was making them feel as well as what they could do better to help fix their problems. They stressed to the athletes that they did not have to deal with their problems alone and there is always someone that they can go to as a student athlete.

Using the sport of baseball as an example to operationalize the impact of stress on performance. Baseball is widely regarded as a mental challenge as much as a physical one, and an athlete's state of mind can profoundly impact their performance on the field. Take hitting, for instance. It's been observed that players sometimes perceive the baseball as larger when they're in a good hitting groove—a phenomenon documented in research by Canal-Bruiland and colleagues in 2010. This perceptual shift is indicative of a positive correlation between mental state and performance. The better mentally capable the individuals are, which means that the individuals have positive thoughts in their heads, the better the performance. Coaches and sports psychologists often emphasize the importance of mental training alongside physical conditioning. Techniques such as visualization, mindfulness, and positive self-talk are frequently employed to cultivate mental resilience and optimize performance under pressure.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As previously stated, stress and anxiety affect everyone, but studies show that college represents a highly demanding experience both personally and academically (Sprung., & Rogers, 2020). Now think about being a student that is demanding experience both personally and academically and add on top a sport. These athletes have to learn how to cope with stress and anxiety without even truly knowing how to.

### **Purpose of the Synthesis**

The purpose of this synthesis project is to review the literature on collegiate athletes' coping behaviors to deal with stress and anxiety.

### **Operational Definitions**

1. Stress is anything that puts pressure on your mind or body. It can be caused by events or situations that make you feel upset or worried. (Team., 2022)

2. Anxiety- is a feeling of fear or worry. It can happen because of stress, but sometimes it happens for no clear reason. (Team., 2022)
3. Coping strategies - are the things you think and do to handle tough situations inside or outside of you. (Emad, & Vikas, 2023)

### **Research Question (s)**

1. How does stress and anxiety affect sport performance?
2. What are effective ways for collegiate athletes to deal with stress and anxiety?

### **Delimitations**

1. The articles that were used for this synthesis were published between 2014-2023.
2. The articles used for this synthesis are full text and peer reviewed.
3. These articles used for this synthesis are related to stress and anxiety of collegiate athletes.



## Chapter 2- Methods and Procedures

The purpose of this synthesis project is to review the literature on collegiate athletes' coping behaviors to deal with stress and anxiety. The studies collected for this synthesis were located using the EBSCO database from the SUNY Brockport's Drake Library. Within the EBSCO database the following database searched was SPORTDiscus.

Keywords were used in this search to create a critical mass of articles related to stress and anxiety in student athletes. These keywords included stress and anxiety, student athletes, college student, collegiate athletes, coping, and coping behaviors. Stress and Anxiety and Student athletes were the two most important words used in the search. Coping and coping behaviors were used to narrow down the search further.

The search conducted was in the SPORTDiscus database. The key words used were stress and anxiety, college students, college athletes, and coping. This search started with stress and anxiety, and this resulted in 3,815 hits. To reduce the results, stress and anxiety, college students were added. This resulted in 375 hits. To reduce the results, stress and anxiety, college athletes. This resulted in 80 hits. Results were limited to stress and anxiety, college athletes, and coping. This resulted in 11 hits. All of these searches were limited to full-text, and peer reviewed and published was 2014-2024. Ten articles were selected through the search process. They were selected based on the appropriateness of the topic. The articles had to relate to student athletes, college students, stress and anxiety, and coping. Four additional articles were used for background information for chapter 1.

The articles selected were from the following journals: *Journal of American College Health*, *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, *Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology*, *Journal of*

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*Athletic Training, Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletic, Journal of Anxiety, Stress & Coping, Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, and Journal of Sports.*

The critical mass for this synthesis consisted of 1,598 total college athletes. All from Division 3, Division 2, and Division 1 programs. Data was collected in the United States. Studies in this synthesis were conducted using both quantitative and quantitative approaches. Sample T test, support group, anxiety inventory, stress scale, questionnaire, response scale, control groups, intervention groups, online surveys, perfectionism scale, online surveys, and semi- structured interviews.

### **Chapter 3- Review of Literature**

The purpose of this synthesis project is to review the literature on collegiate athletes' coping behaviors to deal with stress and anxiety. Cutler and Dwyer, (2020) note that nearly 30 percent of student athletes have been very overwhelmed with their responsibilities while another 33 percent have trouble doing other task outside of their sport because there is such a high demand for their sport resulting in increased levels of stress and anxiety. The following topics will be discussed in this chapter: burnout, (instead of over-exercising and training), inappropriate ways to cope with stress and anxiety and appropriate ways to cope with stress and anxiety,

#### **Inappropriate Ways to Cope with Stress and Anxiety**

##### **Over-Exercising and Training**

Athletic burnout is common when demands of the sport exceed the rewards. Individuals with certain personality dispositions, such as perfectionism, are at increased risk of experiencing perceived stress (Graig et al 2018). Perfectionism is something student athletes will always try and achieve because they want to be the best they possible can at the sport they are playing. This can increase stress and anxiety because they are trying to be so perfect and not make any type of mistake that they are putting so much pressure on themselves. "Competitive athletes who have perfectionistic tendencies tend to overemphasize many aspects of their sport, including neatness, organization, precision, and achievement of their goals" (Graig et al 2018, p. 715).

Graig et al. (2018) sampled 351 participants from Division II and III track and field programs. The age of the participants from 17 to 32 with 132 being men and 219 being women across from 63 programs across the United States. The purpose of this study was to examine the

influence of perfectionistic strivings and concerns on burnout, and perceived stress as a mediator of this relationship in Division II and III specialized and multiple-sport athletes. Data collection included a demographic questionnaire and an online measure of perfectionism, stress, and burnout during the latter part of the competitive season. This passage discusses how burnout in athletes often stems from an imbalance between what they're asked to do and what they get in return, with stress being a major factor. It mentions that personality traits, like perfectionism, can make athletes more prone to stress and burnout. Specifically, negative perfectionism is linked to higher stress levels, while positive aspects of perfectionism seem to protect against burnout. Interestingly, whether athletes focus on one sport, or several doesn't seem to change how perfectionism, stress, and burnout are related. However, those who play multiple sports tend to feel less stressed than those who specialize. In conclusion, the passage highlights the need for more research to fully grasp how perfectionism, stress, and burnout interact in college athletes. But it's clear that stress plays a significant role in athlete burnout. Most athletes are perfectionistic and that means a lot of athletes believe how you do one thing is how you do everything. Trying to become perfect at a sport, sometimes will try and make you be perfect at everything else. No one person in this world is perfect so, with knowing that no one is perfect and for someone to always try to be perfect even though it is not possible it will make them overthink a lot of things going on in their life and make them second guess themselves a lot.

In a similar article Contreras et al, (2023) sampled 86 participants. 47 of these participants are female and 39 were male. The purpose was to evaluate stress, sport anxiety, neuroticism, and coping in student-athletes. In this study, it looked at how stress, sport anxiety, neuroticism, and coping strategies are connected in NCAA Division III student-athletes. We found that athletes with higher sport anxiety also had higher stress and neuroticism. Sport

anxiety wasn't linked to emotion-focused coping. Neuroticism made it less likely for athletes to use emotion-focused coping strategies. Stress and sport anxiety predicted dysfunctional coping, meaning athletes with more stress and anxiety tended to use less effective coping methods. This shows the need to help athletes find better ways to handle their stress and anxiety.

### **Self-Medication**

Incorrectly coping with stress and anxiety is the worst way a college athlete could go about their everyday life. The worst way student athletes try and cope with their stress and anxiety is binge drinking and substance use. About 86 percent of men and women have taken more of than a few sips of alcohol in the past year and 27.8 percent have been binge drinking at least monthly (Knettel et al., 2021).

Knettel et al. (2021) sampled 188 college athletes from Colleges around the United States. In this study there was 142 Women and 46 men, ages from 18-22. The purpose of this study was to analyze the coping strategies of college athletes with an emphasis on their use of alcohol and other substances to cope with stress. When talking about the alcohol and drug use, about 40.9 percent total used a type of self-medication and 51.3 percent of men and 37.5 percent of women uses alcohol and drugs to make them feel better or for them to take a break and to fit in or to feel normal (Knettel 2021).

Two systematic reviews showed that both male and female student-athletes are more likely to abuse alcohol and have alcohol related problems compared to the non-athlete peers (Knettel 2021). In Knettel (2023) it talks about how they are less likely to use marijuana and illicit drugs. This is because for student athletes they can get drugged tested at any moment and if they are doing serious drugs like marijuana or even worse drugs than that it will show up on a drug test and if it does, they will get kicked off the team and even could get kick out of school

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depending on how serious the drug is. Since the student athletes aren't supposed to take drugs, they lean back onto alcohol and that is why they use it more than a non-athlete.

A big part of why student-athletes feel the need to abuse alcohol is because they are trying to find the correct way to balance playing in a sport and other responsibilities but if they use alcohol as a way out of dealing with their responsibilities and dealing with their stress and anxiety it will only keep getting worse and this is why student athletes need think about what they are doing before it gets too far down the road (Knettel 2021).

Souza (2021) When these athletes were asking about the source of stress, they indicated that school itself was stressful followed by their sport, then time management, emotional health, and finances.

Souza (2021) sampled 183 Division I athletes from schools in the United States. 100 of this participates were male and 83 were female. College athletes have a different experience compared to their non-athlete peers because their sports commitments take up a lot of time. This can affect their social lives, academic schedules, and even their ability to visit university health care centers. As a result, many college athletes with mental health issues may go unnoticed, undiagnosed, and untreated. Another way students cope with stress and anxiety incorrectly is by having disordered eating, sleeping and substance use as well as sexual and aggressive behavior. Regarding sexual decision 38 percent of males regret doing what they have done based on intoxication and 21 percent of women regret doing what they have done while being intoxicated. Aggressive behaviors, alcohol use, and fatigue were significantly associated with symptoms of psychological distress and stress in both males and females (Souza 2021). Athletes eating, sleeping, substance use, and aggressive behaviors might provide an insight in the student athletes stress and anxiety. (Souza 2021).

### **Avoidance and Denial**

Nearly 500,000 student-athletes represent 24 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sports teams throughout the country each year (NCAA, 2018). Although participation in sports can be fun and rewarding it is necessary to balance the role of being a full-time student and an elite athlete. This task is very demanding and can be complicated by various factors, including biological issues like injuries, psychological issues like depression and anxiety, social issues like a reduced social life, spiritual issues like a sense of purpose, and other health concerns and challenges. Nearly one-third of student-athletes have some type of anxiety. Cutler and Dryer (2020).

Cutler and Dryer (2020) sampled 158 Division 1 athletes from four different universities. 122 were women and 36 were men. The purpose of this study was to understand what types of stress student athletes are experiencing and what coping mechanisms they are using. One of the most powerful obstacles for athletes to seek help for the challenges they are facing is stigma. Most student athletes negatively perceive therapeutic interventions therefore they completely avoid mental health resources. In fact, when compared to other services available within the athletic department, Cutler and Dryer (2020) found that student athletes felt the least comfortable in seeking mental health services. For researchers and clinicians, it is very easy for them to identify what type of stress and anxiety these student athletes are going through, but for the student athletes it isn't so easy for them and even if they do understand what they are going through, they are still not willing to seek mental health services. Cutler and Dryer (2020) reviewed both facilitators and barriers to student athletes seeking mental health services and found the following constraints: attitudes of numerous athletic stakeholders, gender bias, lack of mental health resources, lack of time, lack of mental health knowledge, and proper institutional

Collegiate athletes' coping behaviors with stress and anxiety Pastore protocols. Student athletes reported that media played a role in whether they would seek mental health assistance or not, and felt if they media found out, it would make matters worse. (Cutler & Dryer, 2020). If student athletes try and hold everything in it will even cause more psychological stress and exacerbate underlying issues over time. Student athletes need to understand that if you they don't deal with stress and anxiety correctly, it could cause more damage than they might think (Cutler & Dryer, 2020). Athletes face many stressors such as everyday problems, class schedule conflicts, relationship issues, and training shortfalls. If these stresses aren't managed well, they can accumulate and become overwhelming, leading to negative outcomes for the athlete. (Graig et al, 2018). Rewrite this sentence so it is not a direct quote.

### **Appropriate ways to deal with Stress and Anxiety**

The following presents appropriate ways for athletes to deal with stress and anxiety. Specifically, the following topics will be addressed: seeking professional help,

#### **Seeking Professional Help**

Fogaca, (2019) sampled 88 student athlete's men's and women's soccer, men's basketball, men's and women's golf, and men's and women's swimming and diving. In this article there is different sessions the players have to go through. One was five sessions with team, four sessions for the captains, and two sessions for the coaches. The Purpose was aimed to teach college student-athletes coping skills to improve both performance and mental health and increase their social support from coaches and captains. The different sessions had to do with learning and setting goals for the ways students can cope with stress and anxiety.

Having different sessions with captains, coaches, and even the full team could be a huge difference making for these student's athletes. While using these three sessions student athletes



came back and said these psychological skills were easy to learn and they also said the skills they have learned are easy to apply to their sports and even their everyday life. For instance, some school have certain sessions with the school psychologist and went over things they could do to slow the game down and how to slow there choices down to make it easier and more helpful for each student athlete. Playing sports is hard and it has a lot of decisions and sometimes they will do the wrong thing and that is because they are stressing out and don't know how to handle it correctly in that moment but if they get taught correctly on how to quickly deal with they will not only let the moment not get to big but they will be more likely to have successes in that moment because they aren't letting the fear of the unknown take over and make them think about failing it will make them only have success on their mind.

College student-athletes often deal with many daily stressors, which contributes to the high rate of mental health issues in this group. These stressors, if not properly managed, can build up over time and potentially lead to mental illnesses. Managing these stressors effectively is crucial to prevent long-term mental health problems. (Fogaca, 2019). From Frogaca (2019) it shows you how serious it truly is to try and help student athletes understand the reasons on why you should do everything in your possibility to deal with your stress and anxiety correctly because if not it could just lead them into a very dark place that could be even harder to get out of than when you first start up. With that being said seeking professional help is a great solution because number one they are not trying to figure out this all by themselves and how to correctly cope with themselves without even knowing what is good to do and what is bad to do. Second thing is that if you go to a professional, they are here to help you figure out your problem and give you ways to solve them in the correct way while also keeping it just between the person seeking help and the professional. Third thing is they understand that this isn't something they

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are going through alone and that there are people out there willing and wanting to help get past this and willing to help them figure out the best ways for them to deal with it rather than them holding it in or binge drinking or even isolate themselves because they think those are the correct things to do.

### **Mindfulness and Meditation Techniques**

Given these challenges, mindfulness has become an important tool for managing stress and anxiety. Mindfulness practices, like meditation and deep-breathing exercises, help people focus on the present moment and become more aware of their thoughts and feelings. By adding mindfulness to their daily routines, college students can handle stress and anxiety more effectively, which leads to better mental health and overall well-being. Mindfulness is often seen as a psychological trait that can be developed and strengthened over time. Dark-Freudemen et al., (2021) sampled 23 participants. 14 of these participants were female and 9 of them were male. The purpose of this article was to present study examined the effectiveness of an MBI in reducing stress, anxiety, and rumination compared to active and traditional control conditions. The present study shows even more proof that Mindfulness-Based Interventions (MBIs) can really help boost mindfulness and lower perceived stress, especially among university students who aren't dealing with clinical mental health issues. This means that university mental health services should definitely consider offering evidence based MBI programs on campus. By bringing in these programs, universities can better handle the growing mental health needs of their students. This would help improve students' overall well-being, making it easier for them to manage stress and do better in both their academic and personal lives.

In a similar study, Mistretta et al, (2017) sampled 45 mixed- sported athletes. 37 were female and 8 were male. The purpose is to do mindfulness training for athletes in an area of

increasing interest, few studies have focused on the qualitative experiences of athletes in such programs. This program was six weeks and 75 minutes at a time. Participants were provided access to recordings of all mindfulness exercises and asked to practice throughout the week. This study was the first to look into what collegiate athletes from various sports expected and experienced when they took part in MSPE training. Not surprisingly, more than two-thirds of the athletes wanted psychological benefits for their sport, like becoming mentally tougher and better at controlling their emotions during competitions. Another quarter of the athletes specifically mentioned wanting to reduce anxiety and increase relaxation, as well as improve their overall sport performance. Additionally, over half of the athletes were hoping to gain broader psychological benefits that weren't directly related to their sport. These included things like building confidence and gaining a better understanding of themselves. Nearly a quarter of the athletes were also looking for general improvements in managing anxiety and feeling more relaxed overall. Overall, the study highlighted that athletes are seeking both sport-specific and general psychological benefits from MSPE training, indicating a strong desire for comprehensive mental health support. This underscores the importance of providing such training programs to help athletes improve both their performance and their overall well-being.

### **Summary**

Research has shown that stress and anxiety is a very difficult thing to deal with no matter who you are. There is a lot of different ways to deal with stress and anxiety. Student athletes don't all correctly cope with stress and anxiety and that is because there is a bunch of different ways to do that and some could be very good, but some could also, be very bad. If talking to someone that has dealt with stress and anxiety as a student athlete before and seen how quick it

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could snowball, it could be good for student athletes to hear their stories and see how something so tiny could play such a big roll on your life if they don't cope with stress and anxiety the correct way.

#### **Chapter 4 – Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the review of literature on the coping behaviors of stress and anxiety that collegiate athletes use or don't use and how these results align with the purported research questions which guided this synthesis project. In addition, recommendations for future research as it relates to the experiences of student athletes are presented.

The results of this review of literature revealed a few things. The researched consistently indicated that student athletes all deal with some type of stress and anxiety whether it is on the field for the sport they play or in the classroom, or going out and making friends, or something going on with their family or partner. Even though all of these student athletes deal with trying to balance playing a sport and having a life they still have to try and figure out ways to cope with stress and anxiety. The thing they don't do very well is learn about and deal with that stress and anxiety in the correct ways. A second theme was how dealing with stress and anxiety incorrectly could cause way more damage than anyone could even think of, and this is because dealing with it incorrectly. The third thing was the lack of places the student athlete felt like they could go too, they thought they had to deal with it themselves and didn't have anyone to talk to about it but in reality, a bunch of their teammates were always there to help them and so were the coaches. Fourth thing how much better of a student athlete they would be if they learned how to deal with stress and anxiety correctly and if they did that, they could make better decisions right away if they understood the correct coping mechanisms rather making it worse for them dealing with stress and trying to hold it in and letting it build up.

Although most literature in this study reported the negative experiences and some of the positive. Having student athletes understand that it is okay to have stress and anxiety, but it is not okay to incorrectly cope with stress and anxiety. Student athletes believe that if they have stress and anxiety, they have a problem rather than coming out and trying to get help they hold it all in and makes it even worse for them. This is why if the student athletes understand how more successful in life they will become if they deal with stress and anxiety correct, they might be more willing to go out of their way and find help.

## **Discussion**

### **Interpretations**

As part of this literature review, two research questions were posed. The first research question was, how does stress anxiety affect sport performance? The results of the literature review showed that techniques such as visualization, mindfulness, and positive self-talk are frequently employed to cultivate mental resilience and optimize performance under pressure. If the student athlete understood how to correctly cope with the stressful and anxiety moments that they would have a better chance to succeed in that moment. Research shows that dealing with stress and anxiety isn't easy and everyone needs to understand that and stop putting so much pressure on themselves and want to help get what they need to make them in a better place.

The participants in the literature review expressed unfavorable experiences with dealing with stress and anxiety and that is because a lot of the participants were coping with their stress and anxiety incorrectly. They would cope with their stress and anxiety in a lot of different ways and that is correctly and incorrectly. The biggest thing in this literature review showed how student athletes wouldn't go and find help even if it was directly in front of them and this is

because people think dealing with stress and anxiety is something bad and if they can't deal with it by themselves then there is something wrong with them. Student athlete needs to understand that it might be the most difficult time in their lives and that if they are just flushing everything away and drinking and doing things that will cause them to go back and think about and think was okay is something very bad.

Another concern is that student athletes would rather block all of the stress and anxiety away and try and keep going on with life rather than face it. This could cause further issues down the road. If student athletes could get more guides on what could help them become a better person. Also, if you show the results on if you cope with your stress and anxiety correctly you will be better at making quicker decisions, and just make you an all-around better athlete.

The second research question was, what are effective ways for collegiate athletes to deal with stress and anxiety? The results of this literature review highlighted the importance of why you should seek help and cope with your stress and anxiety the correct way. Student athletes need to understand that poorly coping with their stress and anxiety could put them down a very bad path not only because it might make them get lazy and only want to do the wrong things because that is how they don't have to face their stress and anxiety but also, it might make them think that this is the correct way to deal with stress and anxiety. It shows that student athletes like to binge drink and do drugs to try and ignore what is truly going on. They could just bury it all the way down where they think it might not come back up but if they keep burying it deeper and deeper at one point it will come back out and instead of it being something very little it will be something huge that might be very hard to cope with.

The good thing is that it is getting easier for these athletes to find the correct ways to deal with stress and anxiety and that is because schools are starting to fight for more mental health

awareness around campuses. Also, more and more coaches are willing to be there on and off the field for their athletes and if these athletes are building a great bond with coaches around the school. Students are going to be more willing to step into their office and let them know what is going on with them and why it seems like the athlete might feel off. Another thing that is going in the right direction is other teammates are willing to help each other figure stuff out and this is great because the upper classman was right in the underclass's shoes not too long ago and if they talk to them like they have been there before it might get to that athlete and see where they could go if they cope with stress and anxiety the correct way.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

In reviewing the data on collegiate athletes coping behaviors with stress and anxiety the following limitations were noted regarding the studies under review. During these studies it is hard for people to truly come out and say everything that they have going on especially if they know it will be involved in research. Based on this it might make the student athletes do not feel comfortable either participating in the study or even not telling the truth with all the answers. Another thing is that the student athletes not willing to actually help themselves and try and do things to help build them up and deal with the stress and anxiety correctly.

Based on these limitation and other insights related to the literature the following recommendation for future research

1. Make these interviews by themselves and have them truly open up with what is going on and let them see what the athlete has been doing to try and cope with their stress and anxiety rather than doing an email or a survey or even an open decision with other teammates around them.



2. Before the research starts show the athletes why this research is going on and how it could benefit them if they are coping with the stress and anxiety correctly because if they see the really good from coping with it correctly and the really bad with incorrectly coping with it, it might make the athletes try and make sure they are coping with it correctly if they see a reason why it will help them.
3. Future studies should make sure to see why the reasoning is that they don't want to seek help or even why they aren't willing to open up about things going on with them to get more of an understand of why the incorrectly coping happens.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this literature review was to determine the way collegiate athletes cope with stress and anxiety. Delimiting variables were used to do an exhaustive data-based search which yielded 11 articles. These articles were then used to determine the ways collegiate athletes coped with stress and anxiety. Research revealed that student athletes have a hard time coping with stress and anxiety correctly and this is because it is way easier for them to brush and it off and do bad things to drain their mind from in than do the correct thing and deal with it. This is primarily due to student athletes do not understand the effects of dealing with it correctly and incorrectly and with that being say that is why it is important for these athletes to understand the pros and cons on coping with stress and anxiety which a lot of them don't truly know. Although some didn't talk about the bad ways they were coping with stress and anxiety other were having success with helping each other out and starting to realize that not only with this help them mentally as people but even for on field decisions when they are coming fast at them. By examining the research on how well student athletes were coping with stress and anxiety, a

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smoother transition for these athletes could occur in the future and this is because if they learn how to cope with it correctly now, they are going to keep helping other understand why it is important and have more people push for them coping with it correctly.

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Author	Title	Source	Purpose	Methods & Procedures	Analysis	Findings	Discussion/ Recommendations
David William Contreras, PsyD; Megan D. Granquist, PhD, ATC; Luci A. Martin, PhD	Stress, Sport Anxiety, Neuroticism, and Coping in Student-Athletes: Implications for Patient Mental Health	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	The purpose is to evaluate stress, sport anxiety, neuroticism, and coping in student-athletes.	The sample comprised 86 student-athletes competing in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III.	The Perceived Stress Scale, Sport Anxiety Scale-2, neuroticism scale of the Big Five Inventory, and Brief COPE were used to measure stress, sport anxiety, neuroticism, and coping, respectively.	These findings can inform the development of interventions targeting stressed, anxious, and neurotic student-athletes in the hope of helping them acquire more appropriate means of coping.	Such results warrant future exploration to inform behavioral interventions targeting student-athlete psychosocial factors to promote improved performance, reduce injury risk factors (eg, stress, personality, coping), and enhance

							student-athlete mental health and well-being.
<b>Betsy A. Cutler, Brendan Dwyer</b>	<b>Student-Athlete Perceptions of Stress, Support, and Seeking Mental Health Services</b>	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	To understand what types of stress SAs are experiencing and what coping mechanisms they are using.	<i>The current study surveyed 158 Division I athletes from four universities seeking to explore perceptions of stress, coping mechanisms, support from coaches and some athletic department personnel, and the stigma of seeking help</i>	To answer RQ 1, a paired samples t-test was utilized to explore differences in stress among SAs. Mean agreement differences were explored between the three forms of stress experienced by SAs. A paired samples t-test was also conducted to answer RQ 2, as mean likelihood of help seeking behavior	<i>The results indicated student-athletes perceive stress impacting their daily life, but in different forms. Student-athletes were also more likely to seek help from non-team support staff than coaches and team-related support staff, and in</i>	Future studies should also examine coaching styles and coaching perceptions of athletes seeking mental health.



					differences were sought between the three athletic support groups. To answer RQ 3, a Pearson correlation was run to assess the relationships between SAs utilizing specific athletic personnel and their ability to manage stress.	<i>general, perceived teammates who sought mental health treatment more positively than their perception of how their teammate would treat other teammates.</i>	
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<p>Dark-Freudeman, Alissa<sup>1</sup> Jones, Colby<sup>1</sup> Terry, Christian<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>Mindfulness, anxiety, and perceived stress in university students: Comparing a mindfulness-based intervention (MBI) against active and traditional control conditions.</p>	<p>International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology</p>	<p>The present study examined the effectiveness of an MBI in reducing stress, anxiety, and rumination compared to active and traditional control conditions.</p>	<p>23 participants Undergraduate students at a southeastern university participated in either a 4-week MBI, active control, or traditional control condition. Measures were collected pre- and post-intervention.</p>	<p>Anxiety was measured using the state portion of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) Perceived stress was measured using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) Mindfulness was measured using The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) Rumination was measured using the Ruminative Response Scale. participants responded to demographic questions including</p>	<p>Within the past two decades, an increase in both frequency and severity of mental health concerns among college students has unfortunately been observed.</p>	<p>Future studies should also include follow-up assessments to examine the extent to which intervention effects are maintained over time. Next, many MBSR intervention studies contain a retreat.</p>
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					relationship status, age, gender, race, and availability for the study (e.g. class and work schedules).		
de Souza, Nicola L. <sup>1</sup> Esopenko, Carrie <sup>2</sup> Conway, Fiona N. <sup>3</sup> Todaro, Sabrina M. <sup>3</sup> Buckman, Jennifer F. <sup>4</sup>	Patterns of health behaviors affecting mental health in collegiate athletes.	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	To examine the association of multiple health behaviors to mental health functioning in male and female collegiate athletes.	183 Participants: Prospective National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I athletes. Health behaviors (eating, sleeping, substance use, sexual, and aggressive behaviors) and mental health functioning (psychological distress and perceived stress) were assessed.	This preliminary study sought to underscore the reciprocal connection between the body and mind. It suggests that measuring health behaviors, such as diet, sleep, exercise, and alcohol use, may circumvent the need to directly measure mental health symptoms, which many	Aggressive behaviors, alcohol use, and fatigue were significantly associated with symptoms of psychological distress and stress in both males and females	This preliminary study sought to underscore the reciprocal connection between the body and mind. It suggests that measuring health behaviors, such as diet, sleep, exercise, and alcohol use, may circumvent the need to directly

					athletes seem hesitant to do.		measure mental health symptoms, which many athletes seem hesitant to do.
Fogaca, Janaina L. <sup>1</sup>	Combining Mental Health and Performance Interventions: Coping and Social Support for Student-Athletes.	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	The Purpose was aimed to teach college student-athletes coping skills to improve both performance and mental health and increase their social support from coaches and captains	participants were 88 (M age = 19.8 years, SD = 1.1 years) college student-athletes who played 5 sports at a National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I university (51% female, 83% White). Participants were divided into intervention and waitlist control groups and completed the Demographic	First, mean, standard deviation, and frequencies were calculated for the participants' demographic variables. Following this, an independent samples <i>t</i> test identified that there were no significant differences between the intervention and control	The feedback collected from the intervention group indicated that athletes found the psychological skills easy to learn. On a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 meant <i>very easy</i> , the athletes had a mean of 4.40	Although more research on the topic is necessary to draw definitive conclusions, the present study provides initial evidence that mental skills training could be designed

					groups for anxiety,		in a way that athletes learn concomitantly how to use the skills in their sports and other life domains.
Knettel, Brandon A. <sup>1</sup> Cherenack, Emily M. <sup>1</sup> Bianchi-Rossi, Courtney <sup>2</sup>	Stress, Anxiety, Binge Drinking, and Substance Use Among College Student-Athletes: A Cross-Sectional Analysis.	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	The Purpose was to examine stress, athletics-related anxiety, and perceived control of stress as predictors of binge drinking, substance use, and associated risk behaviors	We administered online surveys to 188 college athletes to examine stress, athletics-related anxiety, and perceived control of stress as predictors of binge drinking, substance use, and associated risk behaviors.	We used simple frequencies and descriptive statistics to summarize participant characteristics including frequency of substance use, physical pain, and sources of stress.	Reports of alcohol and drug use in our sample were comparable to national surveys of student-athletes, but opioid misuse was troublingly high. Participants over the age of 21 and males were more likely to report substance	Future interventions should continue to target the social contributors of substance use among student athletes, particularly among men and those over 21, the pathway to opioid use disorders,

						use and risk behaviors. Athletes are susceptible to orthopedic injury and associated pain, which may lead to early exposure to opioids with high potential for abuse.	and untreated anxiety as a potential contributor to substance use.
Knettel, Brandon A. <sup>1,2</sup> Cherenack, Emily M. <sup>2,3</sup> Rougier-Chapman, Conner <sup>4</sup> Bianchi-Rossi, Courtney <sup>5,6</sup>	Examining associations of coping strategies with stress, alcohol, and substance use among college athletes: Implications for improving athlete coping.	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	The purpose of this study was to analyze the coping strategies of college athletes with an emphasis on their use of alcohol and other substances to cope with stress.	An online survey was completed by 188 college athletes competing across NCAA/NJCAA divisions at six institutions in the United States to examine factors associated with substance use coping and whether specific strategies of coping were associated with risk of substance use.	four regression models were conducted to assess the 14 coping subscales on the Brief COPE as correlates of substance use outcomes, including (1) binge drinking once per month or more on the AUDIT-C, (2)	Among college athletes, older age, identifying as a man, and higher perceived stress were associated with higher substance use coping. Higher behavioral disengagement	Coping-focused interventions are likely to have the dual benefit of reducing problematic substance use and enhancing problem solving for other

					any cannabis use in the past 12 months on the ASSIST, (3) any lifetime use of any other substance on the ASSIST, and (4) substance-related risk behaviors, as measured by the number of variables endorsed on the CRAFFT.	coping, higher substance use coping, and lower religious coping were re-lated to greater binge drinking and substance-related risk behaviors	stressors common among college athletes.
Luzzeri M. Garinger, Graig M. Chow and Matteo Luzzeri	The effect of perceived stress and specialization on the relationship between perfectionism and burnout in collegiate athletes	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	The purpose of this study was to examine relationships among perfectionism, stress, and burnout in specialized and multiple sport	Data were collected originally from 522 participants from Division II and III National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) track and field programs <sup>2</sup> . Division II and III track and field programs were chosen specifically due to	The sport-multidimensional perfectionism scale-2 The perceived stress scale, The athlete burnout questionnaire	no previous studies have examined these relationships with collegiate athletes. Findings from the current study revealed a direct	Further investigations on those athletes who participate in more than one sport will shed much-needed light on the risks and benefits of competing in multiple sports during high school

			collegiate athletes. Specifically, this study investigated the mediating effect of stress on the relationship between perfectionism and burnout and differences between specialized and multiple sport collegiate athletes.	the relatively high frequency of athletes participating in more than one sport		positive path from perfectionistic concerns to burnout, making the mediation of stress only partial.	and, potentially, into college.
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<p>Mistretta, Erin G.<sup>1</sup>                  Glass, Carol R.<sup>1</sup>                  Spears, Claire A.<sup>2</sup>                  Perskaudas, Rokas<sup>1</sup>                  Kaufman, Keith A.<sup>1</sup>                  Hoyer, Dennis<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>Collegiate Athletes' Expectations and Experiences With Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement.</p>	<p>International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology</p>	<p>The purpose is to do mindfulness training for athletes in an area of increasing interest, few studies have focused on the qualitative experiences of athletes in such programs.</p>	<p>Before beginning six sessions of mindful sport performance enhancement (MSPE) training, 45 mixed-sport collegiate athletes reported what they hoped and expected to get from the training, and responded afterward to open-ended questions about their experiences.</p>	<p>Participants' reports of the top three things they hoped to get out of the program were coded into six distinct categories: psychological benefits for sport addressing stress, other psychological benefits for sport, psychological benefits outside of sport addressing stress, other psychological benefits outside of sport, sport performance, and mindfulness</p>	<p>Finally, there was evidence to suggest that athletes' expectations predicted similar improvements in outcome measures</p>	<p>The results of this study should be viewed in light of several limitations. Although 45 athletes who attended at least one session of MSPE completed the expectations question before the beginning of the program and responded to the online quantitative measures after the final session, only 22 completed the program evaluation questionnaire</p>
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					and mental training.		
Warfield, Elizabeth <sup>1</sup> Esposito, Philip <sup>1</sup> Braun-Trocchio, Robyn <sup>1</sup>	Differences in Relaxation and Imagery among NCAA Division I Sport Types.	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	The current study analyzed sport type differences in the use of relaxation and performance imagery among NCAA Division I (DI) athletes.	This study included 117 NCAA DI athletes, including team sport (n = 72) and individual sport (n = 45). Participants completed a modified version of The Deliberate Relaxation for Sport Survey through Qualtrics. The Deliberate Relaxation for Sport Survey was modified to fit the scope of the study by removing certain questions that were not relevant	SPSS Statistics software was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic information. The subsections of the questionnaire were classified as the dependent variables of the study, while sport type were classified as the	The present study provided knowledge into how DI collegiate athletes use psychological skills to cope with the demands of their sport and how similar individual and team sport athletes are in the way they use these relaxation and imagery skills.	These data may not be entirely accurate, as participants may respond to the survey according to what they think is socially desirable or what their coach may think. The study could be improved by incorporating journals and observations from the participants of the studies that would allow researchers to collect more in-depth data concerning their habits and uses of relaxation and performance imagery strategies across

Collegiate athletes' coping behaviors with stress and anxiety

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					independent variables.		multiple time points
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