Physical characteristics and incidence of injuries in adult figure skaters.

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The young skater

- Begin skating by age 6
- 15-30 h/wk on ice
- 5-15 h/wk off-ice conditioning
- Training is year-round
The adult skater

- 25 years and older
- Many compete in local, regional, national, and international competitions.

Purpose

- Examine physical characteristics, training habits, and recent injuries in adult recreational and competitive skaters.

Methods

- 130 adult skaters (113 women, 17 men, 42 recreational and 88 competitive)
- 25-73 years of age (44±10 years, mean±SD)
- All completed health history and study questionnaire about skating and exercise habits, and general demographic information
Results

Self reported height, weight, and calculated body mass index (BMI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Men (n=17)</th>
<th>Women (n=113)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (yrs)</td>
<td>55±5*</td>
<td>43±9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Height (cm)</td>
<td>175±5*</td>
<td>163±3*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weight (kg)</td>
<td>79±28*</td>
<td>66±11</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMI (kg/m²)</td>
<td>25.4±3.4*</td>
<td>22.0±3.4*</td>
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*, Men vs. Women, p<0.05.

Exercise habits

- Study participants have been skating for an average of 12±10 years (range 1 to 68 years).
- The majority skate 3-4 d/wk and approximately 4-5 h/wk (Competitive > Recreational).
- Many participate in other forms of exercise on a regular basis, similar to their younger counterparts.
How often do you warm-up and/or stretch before getting on the ice to skate?

Injuries

- 72 skaters (53 competitive and 19 recreational) reported at least one injury in the past year.
- 91 injuries total, 69 related to skating.
- No difference in incidence of warm-up or stretching activities or number of hours skating per week between those with skating-related injury and those with no injury.

Anatomical region of injuries related to skating during the past year.
Conclusions

- Adult skaters may be at increased risk of injury, and have training and exercise habits that may increase the risk of injury as well as impair athletic performance.

- This suggests the need for more educational programming for adult figure skaters, including basic principles of exercise training and injury prevention to promote better overall health and improved athletic performance.

Future Areas of Research

Future studies will need to evaluate the influence of exercise and skating habits, strength, flexibility, boot-related issues, and other factors on athletic performance and the incidence of injuries in adult skaters.

Acknowledgements

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