

Paralympic Sports And Injuries

Col Dr Ridzuan Azmi

94 Armed Forces Hospital Terendak Malacca, Malaysia

Paralympic sports have becoming increasingly popular these days. Exponential increases in participation have been seen since the first Stoke Mandeville Games on the Opening Day of Olympic Games in 1948 whereby there were 16 of them. In London 2012 Paralympic Games, the numbers who participated were have reached as many as 4000 athletes.

This rapid increase had also led them to many predisposing factors to injury that causing various injuries and illnesses. Broad overview of injury patterns in Paralympic sports potentially loses sight of risk and risk factor relationships in specific sports/disability interactions, and the small numbers in any particular combination renders analyses and conclusions unstable.

The IPC's (International Paralympic Committee) Injury Surveillance System was implemented in 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games The first summer games was during the London 2012.

What information do we have so far regarding the epidemiology of Paralympic injuries?

The largest prospective cohort study done was back in London 2012 whereby involving 49,910 athlete-days (14 days period). 160 of 164 delegations participated and 3,565 total athletes were included. 633 injuries were identified in 539 athletes.

The injury incidence rate was 12.7 injuries/1000 athlete-days. The highest incidences were football 5-a-side, powerlifting and goal ball by sport. New onset acute injuries contributed 51.5% of all reported injuries.

The distribution of injury by body part was greatest in the upper limb irrespective of impairment type (50.2% of all injuries), with shoulder injuries being most prominent (17.7% of all). The knee contributed as the most common injuries on lower limb (7.9% of all injuries).

657 illnesses were reported in 505 athletes and the overall illness rate was 13.2 per 1000 athlete-days. The most common illnesses were respiratory, skin and digestive system. Highest incidences were equestrian, powerlifting and athletics by sport.