Adapting CrossFit for Enhanced Participation With Injured Warriors/Veterans

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Abstract

Objective: The purpose of this study was to advocate for the inclusion of the injured warrior/veteran population into the CrossFit community. This was accomplished by designing adaptations to CrossFit movements to fit the unique needs of individuals with polytrauma injuries, including physical adaptations for manual wheelchair users (HMLD). Additionally, a short yoga program was designed and implemented at the end of each CrossFit class for the group 1 participant. A questionnaire was then distributed to injured warriors/veterans from Clashclaw, TN in order to acquire existing level interests and experiences with CrossFit and other forms of adapted fitness.

Design: Mixed methods: quantitative and qualitative

Methods: Manual wheelchair adaptations were developed through research of other programs and observation of existing adaptive athletes. A questionnaire was completed by 15 anonymous participants from Connected Warriors in Clarksburg. The individual in group 2 was a non active duty male soldier at the age of 23 with a sustained TBI, pelvic floor injury, and PTSD from 2011. He participated in CrossFit classes at CrossFit Hermitage and pilot tested the connected more years yoga program to determine its efficacy for combat trauma related injuries.

Results: Results from the questionnaire indicated polytrauma, post traumatic stress (PTS), and back injury/pain to be the most common injuries with this population. Forty percent of participants reported CrossFit to have a significant impact on their lives. Several exercise programs were additionally listed, however, the most frequent program reported was Yoga at 66%, which supported existing research discussing yoga’s influence on individuals with PTSD and other combat related injuries.

Conclusions: It was found through Rogers et al. (2014) that high intensity sports performed in a community environment significantly reduces PTS and depressive symptoms, supporting transitions into a civilian lifestyle. The survey responses support the existing interest level with fitness programs and Yoga. Furthermore, results from the group 2 participant regarding weight loss, improved self confidence, and improved self esteem suggest that CrossFit’s high intensity community environment could be used to support injured warriors/veterans with community integration, providing an overall improved quality of life.

Mission:

My mission is to advocate for the inclusion of injured warriors/veterans into the CrossFit community. I desire to promote participation and engagement in a meaningful and community based fitness program in order to facilitate community reintegration opportunities. To accomplish this task, adaptations to CrossFit movements have been designed in order to meet the unique needs of injured warriors/veterans with polytrauma injuries. By doing this, individuals will experience an overall improved health and well being of life.

Goals:

1. To obtain a better understanding and perspective of injured warriors/veterans interests and experiences with CrossFit and overall health and fitness
2. To advocate for the inclusion of injured warriors/veterans in the community by adapting CrossFit workouts for enhanced participation
3. To contribute clinical excellence and leadership skills through designing modifications to CrossFit workouts for injured warrior/veteran participation

Table 1: CrossFit Program Design for Injured Warriors/Veterans With Post Traumatic Stress and Combat Trauma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deviation</th>
<th>CrossFit WOD (Workout of the Day)</th>
<th>Connected More Years Yoga Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>05/30/0500</td>
<td>05/06/0700</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare the mind and heart for the day with a 30 minute devotion</td>
<td>Prepare the body with an hour CrossFit WOD</td>
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<td>07/09/0715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spend the last 15 minutes relaxing/stretching with Connected More Years Yoga Program</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Wall Buks

Sitting options: Bun bed shoulder press overhead
Barbell shoulder press with knees to chest

Clean

Sitting options: Disks from a raised surface (Position phase begins left and right side)
Bent over from raised surface if needed (place arm in lap for protection)

Hill (Hand release) Push ups

Sitting push-ups:
Transfer to floor or mat and perform bridge push-ups while stabilizing lower extremities

Push Press

Sitting options:
- Disks on shoulder
- Overhead Press
- Overhead Press with knees to chest

HIIT (High intensity interval training) Push Ups

Sitting push-ups:
- With two sets
- Perform brand press

Lightning Review

CrossFit is a unique program designed for individuals to strive in and achieve desired fitness goals. It is constantly varied, high in intensity, and fun, while maintaining a sense of community. It is a unique program designed for individuals to strive in and achieve desired fitness goals. It is constantly varied, high in intensity, and fun, while maintaining a sense of community.

Research


References


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Kathy Rogers, RYT, Certified Yoga Instructor, KY/TN Regional Coordinator, Connected Warriors Yoga