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Depression in athletes: The role of CBT

Concussion has become the signature injury in athletes as a result of the high public exposure in the media and lay press. Depression has been reported as a potential long-term consequence of repetitive mild concussion, yet few effective treatment interventions have been demonstrated to date. CBT has been shown to be an effective intervention in depressed athletes without a reported history of multiple concussions. The core clinical phenotype of mood symptoms is similar, but not identical, in concussed vs. non-concussed athletes. Given the potential significant issues with unanticipated side-effects experienced by concussed athletes on antidepressant medications, CBT may play a pivotal role in the treatment of depressed concussed, or post concussive, athletes. In this presentation, the author will review the extant literature, and share his over 3 decades of clinical experience, on depression in athletes and the unique advantages of CBT as an effective treatment intervention. The need for subtle modifications of classic techniques will be highlighted. Clinical case examples will be offered to underscore the value of this intervention in this unique patient population. Time will be made for questions and comments at the end of the presentation. The BDSA, a novel clinical depression screener for athletes developed by the presenter will be presented and discussed.

Biography

David Baron is currently a Professor of Psychiatry at the Keck School of Medicine at University of Southern California, Director, and Global Center for Exercise, Psychiatry and Sports at USC and Adjunct Professor at the USC School of Cinema-Television. He is currently working on cutting edge research on Traumatic Brain Injuries funded by the NFL. He received his MEd from USC, and trained in bioethics at Georgetown University and NIH. Additionally, he was the NIMH bioethics representative at NIH.

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