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ANALYSIS OF FUNCTIONAL ANKLE INSTABILITY AND DYNAMIC BALANCE AMONG KABADDI PLAYERS.

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Background: Kabaddi is one of the most popular traditional contact sports in India and has now gained international recognition due to its unique blend of strength, speed, and strategy. The sport requires players to perform rapid accelerations, quick directional changes, jumps, dodges, and tackles while maintaining balance on an uneven surface, these repeated ankle stresses often leads to lateral strain and functional ankle instability (FAI). Instability may negatively impact proprioception and dynamic balance, increasing the risk of recurrent injuries and reduced performance.

Purpose: To asses functional ankle instability in kabaddi players using the Cumberland ankle instability tool (CAIT). To evaluate dynamic balance using the Y-balance test (YBT).

Methods and Materials: A cross- sectional study design was used. Kabaddi players who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were selected. CAIT scores were recorded to determine the level of ankle instability and YBT reach distances were measured in anterior, posteromedial and posterolateral directions. The collected data was analysed using appropriate statistical tests.

Results: Players with lower CAIT Scores (greater instability) showed reduced Y-Balance test reach distances, indicating impaired dynamic balance. A significant relationship was found between functional ankle instability and dynamic balance performance among kabaddi players.

Conclusion: This study revealed that kabaddi players had a mean CAIT Score of 19.37 ± 2.51 , indicating a high prevalence of functional ankle instability. Nearly 85% of the players were found to have unstable ankles. This suggests that repetitive jumping, sudden direction changes and tackling in kabaddi increases the risk of ankle instability. Regular screening and proprioception and balance training are recommended to improve stability and prevent recurrent injuries.

Keywords: Functional ankle instability, Dynamic balance, Kabaddi players, Cumberland ankle instability tool, Y- Balance test.