

Tuesday, 17 March 2015

Yet another reason sport is good for you!

According to the saying, there's no 'I' in team – and when it comes to team sport, there's not much depression, anxiety or stress either. The latest findings from Roy Morgan Research show that the 1.35 million Australian adults who participate regularly in some kind of team sport* are noticeably less likely than the average Aussie to experience these mental health conditions.

Between 2013 and 2014, 25% of Australians aged 18+ reported experiencing stress at some point in the preceding 12 months, compared with 21% of those who regularly play a team sport. Some 16% suffered from anxiety, a figure which fell to 12% of regular team-sport players; and 14% had depression, considerably higher than the 8% of those who play regular team sport.

This difference is most striking among the under-25 age group, with all three conditions being far less common among those who play team sport on a regular basis. Incidence of anxiety fell from 31% to 17%, depression from 17% to 8%, and anxiety from 20% to 10%.

The effect of regular team sports participation on depression, anxiety and stress

	% who experienced depression in last 12 months		% who experienced anxiety in last 12 months		% who experienced stress in last 12 months	
	Average	Regular team sports participant	Average	Regular team sports participant	Average	Regular team sports participant
18-24 years	17%	8%	20%	10%	31%	17%
25-34 years	13%	6%	18%	13%	28%	23%
35-49 years	17%	11%	18%	12%	30%	24%
50+ years	12%	9%	12%	11%	19%	14%
Total	14%	8%	16%	12%	25%	21%

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January 2013 – December 2014 (n=95,696). **Base:** Australians 18+. **NB:** Team sports include: AFL, Basketball, Cricket, Field hockey, Netball, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Soccer, Softball, Baseball, Volleyball.

Anxiety, depression and stress are also less common in people from other age groups who regularly participate in team sports.

For example, 30% of Aussies aged 35-49 reported experiencing stress last year, but this fell to 24% of those who play regular team sport. Similarly, 13% of 25-35 year-olds suffered depression – compared with 6% of regular team-sport players from that age bracket.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Angela Smith, Group Account Director, Roy Morgan Research, says:

“Everybody knows sport is good for you: its fitness and weight-loss benefits are well known and widely promoted. But the positive impact of team sport on mental/emotional well-being is just as important, with some far-reaching implications.

“As our latest findings show, people who regularly participate in team sports such as netball, soccer, AFL and cricket are much less likely to suffer from anxiety, stress and depression, the mental health conditions most commonly experienced by Australian adults. This reduced incidence is evident even among the vulnerable 18-24 age group.

“Whether it’s due to the endorphin rush of high-impact exercise, the satisfaction of working towards a shared goal, the social support system that comes with being part of a team, or a combination of all these factors, the overall benefit of team sport on mental health is undeniable.

“Not only is this good news for the people directly involved, but also for the wider population, as it eases the pressure on our already stretched healthcare system.”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s sport and health data, please contact:**Vaishali Nagaratnam**

Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309

Vaishali.Nagaratnam@roymorgan.com**Related research findings**

View our extensive range of [Sports Participant profiles](#), including the [AFL Player profile](#), [Cricket Player profile](#), and [Field Hockey Player profile](#). You might also be interested in our [Mental Health profiles](#), including [People with Depression](#) and [People with Stress](#). These ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2