Effect of Psychological Factors on Postoperative Recovery in Athletes

Injury-induced distress and psychological conditions can hamper the recovery process in athletes.

Potential responses to injury are...
- Depression
- Anxiety and fear response
- Eating disorders and substance use
- Loss of athletic identity

How do psychological factors affect the outcomes of orthopaedic surgical interventions?

Psychological factors associated with...

Suboptimal recovery:
- Kinesiophobia
- Depression
- Unrealistic expectations
- Fear of reinjury

Favorable recovery:
- Athletic identity
- Self-efficacy
- Self-esteem
- Internal health locus of control
- Psychological readiness to return to sport
- Realistic expectations
- Resilience

Interventions to improve surgical outcomes and overall care:
- Mental health screening and professional referrals
- Cognitive behavioral therapy, guided imagery, relaxation, and mindfulness
- Multi-disciplinary care of athletes

Improved methods of inquiring, evaluating, and addressing the psychological needs of injured athletes will enhance patient care and improve postoperative outcomes.