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| We also wish to study the effect of the 'quick fix' stress relievers such as alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs on athletic and non athletic individuals. "Scientists have found that smoking cigarettes is in many ways a 'coping response' to the stress of daily living." (Diamond, p. 227) However, quitting smoking is incredibly stressful for two reasons: a. the nicotine withdrawls, and b. the lost of a coping mechanism. While initially smoking will decrease stress levels in one's life, scientists have found that the mounting addiction begins to add to the stress in one's life. (Diamond, p. 228) Trying to quit smoking is one of the most stressful events in a smoker's life, and the last thing that an already stressed out individual needs is an addiction to nicotine. Even if the smoker is not attempting to quit, scientists are adding more and more diseases and disorders to the list of smoking's effects every year. In addition, as tolerance increases, the quick fix is no longer so easy to attain. Added to the social pressures now put on smokers, what was once a coping mechanism is now a source of stress in itself. Since we assume that athletes smoke less than non athletes, we believe that this is a secondary benefit reaped from the athletic lifestyle.   The stress reducing effects of alcohol are much more dubious. Since people consume alcohol for the very purpose of reducing stress, a placebo effect is introduced. "In a study of the stress reducing effects of alcohol, one group was given two drinks of vodka, while the second group was given an equal amount of tonic water and vitamin C. Half of the subjects in each group were told that they were given alcohol, and the other half were told they were given vitamin C. Those who thought they consumed alcohol, whether they did or did not, reported greater mood elevation than those who thought they consumed Vitamin C." (Charlesworth, p. 203) We believe that alcohol consumption amongst athletes is less than the alcohol consumption of the average teenager. We wish to study through our survey the added stress of drinking illegally as a teenager between athletes and non athletes. If our assumptions are correct, then competitive athletes will not only have less stress because of their exertions but also because of the potential stressors like alcohol and cigarette that they are forced to usually avoid.    Nutrition is another key factor to stress relief. It is assumed that athletes and exercisers both get reasonably good diets, whereas a non-athletic individuals have diets that would probably be all over the scale of nutrition. For those with weight problems, there can be a cycle of stressful situation leading to overeating which leads to weight gain, which then leads to another stressful situation. (Diamond, 143) In most cases, the original stressor also exists, so the overeating solved nothing. While this may not be the case with most non-exercisers and non-athletes, the lack of three healthy, nutritious meals a day can lead to physical wear down.. Since exercise intensity, habits, and nutrition will presumably be close to the same between the athletes and exercisers, the only variable is the presence of competition in their workouts. The control group in our survey is the non-exercisers, non-athletic individuals. Since they neither play a sport nor exercise on their own time, they provide a baseline from which to base our results.    Our final point of study is the difference between types of exercise. Forms of exercise vary drastically from yoga, to walking, to jogging, to simple cardio vascular activity, to competitive sports. Is there a difference between competitive and non competitive exercisers? Does a background in competitive sports help an individual learn to cope with daily stress better than an individual that simply exercises but does not play a competitive sport? Certainly one faces immense amounts of physical stress in a competitive sport while simultaneously working out the day's stress through athletic activity.      ([Intro1](http://docs.google.com/introduction.html))([Intro2](http://docs.google.com/intro2.html))([Intro3](http://docs.google.com/intro3.html))([Intro4](http://docs.google.com/intro4.html)) [(intro5)](http://docs.google.com/intro5.html)  [[Home](http://docs.google.com/home.html)][[Introduction](http://docs.google.com/introduction.html)][[Hypothesis](http://docs.google.com/hypothesis.html)][[Procedure](http://docs.google.com/procedure.html)][[Data](http://docs.google.com/data.html)][[Conclusions](http://docs.google.com/conclusions.html)][[Bilio/Links](http://docs.google.com/biblio.html)]  [[2002 Projects](http://docs.google.com/AP2002/index.html)][[2001 Projects](http://docs.google.com/index.html)][[2000 Projects](http://docs.google.com/AP2000/index.html)][[1999 Projects](http://docs.google.com/AP99/index.html)][[1998 Projects](http://docs.google.com/AP98/index.html)] |