

# **Underwater Struggles: An Approach to Depression, Anxiety, and Burnout in Swimmers**

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**Abstract:** Competitive swimming, often seen as a rigorous sport, has profound impacts in the physical well-being of athletes and on their mental health. It demands high levels of dedication and resilience, which can sometimes lead to psychological challenges such as depression, anxiety, and burnout. This brief review aims to resume on a solid basis the impact of depression, anxiety, and burnout in swimmers. Five studies were analysed. The research sentence was defined ((depression OR anxiety OR burnout) AND (swimmers OR swimming OR swim)) and the search was done considering only title and abstract and publication dates from the past six years. Time of day and sleep quality significantly affect adolescent swimmers' performance, anxiety, and depression, varying by trial distance and sex. Broad, data-driven research is needed to differentiate healthy engagement from maladaptive specialization. Aquatic exercises show mental health benefits, requiring clinician support, confidence, and safety, with seasonal limitations. Moreover, coaches should consider athletes' circadian typology and sleep quality for optimal performance. There is a lack of information regarding mental health in competitor swimmers. Future studies must refine intervention strategies, assess sustainability, and address heterogeneity in findings, as comprehensive, nuanced empirical evidence remains crucial. Apart from the competitive athletes, aquatic exercises appear to benefit mental health, but require clinician support, confidence, and safety considerations. Time of day and sleep quality impact adolescent swimmers' performance and mental health, differing by trial distance and sex. There is a need for information to truly understand the difference between healthy engagement and maladaptive specialization.

**Keywords:** swimming, depression, anxiety, burnout.

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