

Health Benefits of Exercise

Background of the Public Health Issue

- “A moderate amount of physical activity as roughly equivalent to physical activity that uses approximately 150 Calories (kcal) of energy per day, or 1,000 Calories per week.” (CDC)
- Some examples of moderate physical activity are:
 - “Washing and waxing a car for 45-60 minutes”
 - “Gardening for 30-45 minutes”
 - “Shoveling snow for 15 minutes”
 - “Raking leaves for 30 minutes”(CDC)
- Some less intense activities from the CDC list are:
 - “Including making photocopies, playing video games, coloring, sitting in a whirlpool bath, floating and “purposeless wandering.” (Defeat diabetes)
- “CDC reports over half are not getting recommended minimum of just a total of 30 minutes throughout the day for at least 4 days a week.” (CDC)
- “Health officials say Americans’ lack of exercise is one of the nation’s most pressing health problems, leading to increases in obesity, heart disease, hypertension or diabetes.” (CDC)
- “Given the numerous health benefits of physical activity, the hazards of being inactive are clear. Physical inactivity is a serious, nation wide problem. Its scope poses a public health challenge for reducing the national burden of unnecessary illness and premature death.” (CDC)
- “More than 60 percent of adults do not achieve the recommended amount of regular physical activity. In fact, 25 percent of all adults are not active at all.” (CDC)
- “Inactivity increases with age and is more common among women than men and among those with lower income and less education than among those with higher income or education.” (CDC)
- “Nearly half of young people aged 12-21 are not vigorously active on a regular basis.” (CDC)
- “Physical activity declines dramatically with age during adolescence.” (CDC)
- “Female adolescents are much less physically active than male adolescents.” (CDC)

- “In high school, enrollment in daily physical education classes dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to 25 percent in 1995.” (CDC)
- “Only 19 percent of all high school students are physically active for 20 minutes or more in physical education classes every day during the school week.” (CDC)

Statement of the Problem

- Physical activity is one of the leading indicators and focus areas in Healthy People 2010.
- “Increase the proportion of adolescents who engage in vigorous physical activity that promotes cardiorespiratory fitness 3 or more days per week for 20 or more minutes per occasion”. (Healthy People 2010)
- “Increase the proportion of adults who engage regularly, preferably daily, in moderate physical activity for least 30 minutes per day”. (Healthy People 2010)
- “Regular physical activity that is performed on most days of the week reduces the risk of developing or dying from some of the leading causes of illness and death in the United States. Regular physical activity improves health in the following ways:”
 - Reduces the risk of dying prematurely.
 - Reduces the risk of dying prematurely from heart disease.
 - Reduces the risk of developing diabetes.
 - Reduces the risk of developing high blood pressure.
 - Helps reduce blood pressure in people who already have high blood pressure.
 - Reduces the risk of developing colon cancer.
 - Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety.
 - Helps control weight.
 - Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints.
 - Helps older adults become stronger and better able to move about without falling.
 - Promotes psychological well-being. (CDC)
- “It has been estimated that as many as 250,000 deaths per year in the United States, approximately 12% of the total, are attributable to a lack of regular physical activity”. (CDC 1998)
- “This report assesses the role of physical activity in preventing disease and concludes that regular physical activity reduces the risk for developing or dying from coronary heart disease, no insulin-dependent diabetes, hypertension, and colon cancer; reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; contributes to the

development and maintenance of healthier bones, muscles, and joints; and helps control weight”. (CDC 1998)

Epidemiological Picture of the Issue

- “Populations with low rates of physical activity”
 - Women generally are less active than men at all ages.
 - People with lower incomes and less education are typically not as physically active as those with higher incomes and education.
 - African Americans and Hispanics are generally less physically active than whites.
 - Adults in northeastern and southern states tend to be less active than adults in North- Central and Western States.
 - People with disabilities are less physically active than people without disabilities.
 - By age 75, one in three men and one in two women engage in no regular physical activity.
(Nutrstrategy)

- Millions of Americans suffer from illnesses that can be prevented or improved through regular physical activity.
 - 13.5 million People have coronary heart disease.
 - 1.5 million People suffer from a heart attack in a given year.
 - 8 million people have adult-onset (non-insulin-dependent) diabetes.
 - 95,000 people are newly diagnosed with colon cancer each year.
 - 250,000 people suffer from a hip fractures each year.
 - 50 million people have high blood pressure.
 - Over 60 million people (a third of the population) are overweight.
(Nutrstrategy)

- “Participation in regular physical activity gradually increased during the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s, but seems to have plateaued in recent years.” (CDC)

- “Men are more likely than women to engage in regular activity, in vigorous exercise, and sports”. (CDC)

- “Older adults are less physically active than any other age group”. (CDC)

- “Educating families about the importance of physical activity for older adults and ways they could help”. (CDC)

- “Ethnic minority communities in the United States experience a high prevalence of chronic diseases that may be prevented or ameliorated by physical activity”. (CDC)

- “The total amount of time spent engaging in physical activity declines with age.” (CDC)
- “African Americans and other ethnic minority populations are less active than white Americans, and this disparity is more pronounced for women.”(CDC)
- “Epidemiologic research has demonstrated protective effects of varying strength between physical activity and risk for several chronic diseases, including coronary heart disease (CHD), hypertension, non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, osteoporosis, colon cancer, and anxiety and depression.” (CDC)
- “Epidemiologic studies are supported by experimental studies showing that exercise training improves CHD risk factors and other health-related factors, including blood lipid profile, resting blood pressure in borderline hypertensive, body composition, glucose tolerance and insulin sensitivity, bone density, immune function, and psychological function.” (CDC)

Solutions:

- 1) World Gym: World Gym Fitness and Sports Complex: Norwich CT. <http://www.worldgym.com/ClubHome/?loc=1046&p=norwich&ou812=1046> One program that would be extremely helpful to becoming a healthier person would be to join a gym. There are numerous gyms that offer different memberships that can fit your schedule. This article is about World Gym in Norwich CT. There are many of these gyms all over the world that offer, “fabulous group exercise classes, a vast array of cardio and fitness equipment, tennis, basketball, volleyball, personal training, unlimited fitness training classes, tanning, juice bar, supplement and vitamin store, youth strength and conditioning programs, complimentary fitness seminars and much more”. This gym is also a family oriented gym, so this way everyone in the family can workout and enjoy it. One of the better things that this gym has are personal trainers. They teach you how to use the equipment and what equipment will be best beneficial for you and your goals.
- 2) Weight Watchers. <http://www.freedieting.com/weightwatchers.htm> Another program that would be very helpful in becoming healthier is to join a weight loss program, like Weight Watchers, Jenny Grieg, or Curves. This article focuses on Weight Watchers and briefly describes what the program is about. These programs help you get motivated to start losing weight and becoming a healthier person. These programs also teach you how to be a healthier eater.
- 3) Natural Progress Health and Beauty Solutions-Healthy Exercise. http://natral-progress.com/wst_page4.html Another solution to that could help you succeed in weight loss and becoming healthier is Tai Chi. “Practitioners of Tia Chi usually feel benefits in their strength, flexibility and level of energy”. This type of work out would be good for people that have anxiety or depression. It will start to give them more energy and put them in a better mood. Also, it is an easy class to learn. The moves are not difficult and are slow moving. This type of workout would be good for older people that just need a little workout every other day.

Internet resources:

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Health Benefits of Exercise (Handout)

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