



Uniform global recommendations on physical activity for health

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Today there is a worldwide consensus that physical activity is crucial to maintain different aspects of health. The focus has been directed towards the required dose and how it should be implemented to be a natural part of daily living. The general recommendations of physical activity show high degree of international conformity concerning the mode, intensity, frequency and duration of physical activity to reach the required dose, and are explicit for the specific target group (e.g. children, adults, elderly). The global recommendations on PA for health by the World Health Organization (1) for adults 18-64 years old provided serve as an example herein.

One key message is that some physical activity is better than doing nothing. The purpose of this statement is to make people decrease their time spent sedentary. However, more extensive effects on health involve a variation of activities engaging large muscle groups at both moderate and vigorous intensity. As a minimal recommendation, individuals are encouraged to engage in moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity at least 150 minutes throughout the week (e.g. brisk walking, biking, dancing, swimming, household chores) or in vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity at least 75 minutes (e.g. running, fast biking or swimming, sports), or a combination of both intensity levels. Each session should be performed with a duration of at least 10 minutes. Muscle-strengthening activities should be included as well, performed two or more days a week.

However, additional health benefits can be attained with a higher dose of physical activity, for example 300 weekly

minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, alternatively 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity, or a combination of both. There are several opportunities to accumulate the recommended amount of physical activity during occupation, transportation and leisure time, doing sports and exercise and by engaging in family and community activities. The general approach by physically inactive individuals is to increase their physical activity gradually, to increase the chance of maintaining motivation as well as for preventing occurrence of injuries or adverse events.

References

(1) World Health Organization. Global recommendations on physical activity for health. World Health Organization, 2010.