Effect of regular exercises and health benefits among college students
M. Meenapriya¹, R. Gayathri²*, V. Vishnu Priya²

ABSTRACT

Background: Health contributes to the general well-being and overall lifestyle. Exercise is another aspect that is important for a person’s healthy lifestyle. This survey aims at finding the effects of exercise on college students. Objective: The objective of this study is to create awareness on the effect of regular exercises and health benefits among college students. Materials and Methods: Sample size for this study was 100. The survey questionnaire was filled in survey planet, and the link was sent to 100 college students to find the effect of daily exercises among them. The result of the survey was statistically analyzed. Results: Students with healthy lifestyle patterns have the benefits of losing weight, managing stress, and improving memory, focus, and concentration. The survey results indicate that most of the college students follow unhealthy lifestyle patterns and they do not regularly exercise. Conclusion: Since most of the college students do not spend much time for exercise, the unhealthy lifestyle still persists. This study has created awareness among the college students about the benefits of daily exercises on college students.

KEY WORDS: Diet, Exercises, Health, Stress, Weight

INTRODUCTION

Health is a universal trait; the World Health Organization defines health as a “state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease. Health contributes to general well-being and overall lifestyle.”¹ Obesity has become a major public health concern. There is a rapid increase in the number of young adults (20-39) turning obese (30%). The increasing prevalence of obesity among young people is combined with a concomitant low rate of physical activity, with nearly 43% of college undergraduates reporting that they do not participate in either moderate or vigorous physical activity.²

Doing exercises can eliminate anxiety, tension, and stress under pressure conditions. The use of habitual exercise as a stress management technique has the benefits of mood enhancement, increased self-esteem, and reduced psychological and physical stress reactions. According to Graham, Holt, and Parker (1998), physical activities such as basketball, tennis, racquetball, weight-lifting, self-defense, and swimming help students to improve and maintain physical, mental health, and the quality of lives.³

Colleges and universities are potentially important settings for reducing the prevalence of overweight in the adult population through the promotion of healthy weight management practices. While overweight and obesity appear to track from childhood into adulthood, overweight during late adolescence is most strongly associated with an increased risk of overweight in adulthood. Colleges and universities provide numerous opportunities to positively influence physical activity, nutrition, and weight management behaviors of large numbers of older adolescents and young adults in an educational setting.⁴

An important developmental task for college students is learning to manage excess or unnecessary distress while actively engaging with healthy, age-appropriate challenges that promote growth. Studies were conducted earlier for evaluating the effectiveness of meditation-based intervention for reducing…

¹Department of Biochemistry, Saveetha Dental College, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Science, Saveetha University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, ²Department of Biochemistry, Saveetha Dental College, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Science, Saveetha University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

*Corresponding author: R. Gayathri, Department of Biochemistry, Saveetha Dental College, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Science, Saveetha University, 160, Poonamallee High Road, Chennai – 600 077, Tamil Nadu, India. Phone: +91-9710680545. E-mail: gayathri.jaisai@gmail.com

Received on: 19-02-2018; Revised on: 27-03-2018; Accepted on: 29-05-2018
distress and enhancing well-being among college undergraduate populations.[5]

The main purpose of this study is to explore the major lifestyle factors among college students, in an effort to improve their behavior and reduce the risk factors for major diseases.[6-14] This study contributes significantly in improving the quality of college student’s life and helps them live longer, free from diseases, and illnesses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted among college students in an effort to find the effects of daily exercises on general well-being. Data were collected through survey questionnaire that were filled in survey planet, an online forum.

On the whole, 100 participants took part in the survey. The questions based on their lifestyle, food habits, and daily workout were asked to the participant through the link. Among these questions, seven questions come under yes or no type. Other questions are given with appropriate options. The results of the survey were statistically analyzed.

RESULTS

The number of participants who took part in the survey was 100. Among the 100 participants, 61% were female and 39% were male. Age groups of participants who took part in the survey were from 16 to 20 (68%) and 21 to 25 (32%). The participants who does the exercise daily was about 30% [Figure 1], and they perform the exercises for <1 h. Most of the students do not regularly exercise (57%), and they perform only light exercises occasionally (63%). The survey among college students has revealed that the students perform the exercises to lose weight and maintain physique (60%) [Figure 2]. About 63% of the students know about the benefits of daily exercises among them [Figure 3]. And after doing the exercises, they think that their weight has reduced (63%) and they are able to manage stress (78%) [Figure 4]. Students who regularly exercise believe that exercise has a positive role in improving their memory, focus, and concentration (80%) and it boosts their mood and relieves stress (87%) [Figure 4] but does not improve their marks or GPAs (63%) [Figure 5]. Awareness on the benefits of regular exercise was created among the students who took part in the survey [Figure 3].

DISCUSSION

Many of the college students are placing their health at risk through lifestyle choices that include insufficient physical activity and unhealthy food choices.[15-19] Several studies show that a high percentage of the students do not exercise frequently and suffer from increased body weight. College students can ensure both physical and mental health by focusing on consuming a balanced diet, staying hydrated, and getting adequate amount of sleep together with exercise and a healthy lifestyle.
Filip manual study has concluded that there was prevalence of physical activity among college students during weekends. Regular exercises certainly has a role in relieving stress and anxiety. A study conducted by Richard Lowry shows that the U.S college students used exercise and diet for their weight control. A study conducted by Doug Oman shows that there is a evidence for meditation based stress management for the college students. Apart from managing stress, there is evidence for reduced rate of hopelessness, depression, suicidal behavior and alcohol consumption among college students.[20-22]

CONCLUSION

Although there is a sufficient knowledge about the benefits of daily exercises on college students, they do not spend much time for regular workouts, this could be due to their addiction towards gadgets, online games, etc. Therefore, awareness about the benefits of daily exercises among the college students was created using this survey.

REFERENCES


Source of support: Nil; Conflict of interest: None Declared