Research Article

Knowledge, awareness, prevalence, and frequency of daily physical activity in young adults of the present generation

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Physical activity is defined as any physical movement made by the skeletal muscles that need energy. Practicing it daily reduces the chances of acquiring non-communicable diseases such as diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer. This study was performed to analyze the awareness and practice of daily physical activities among young adult people. **Materials and Methods:** A survey based on the topic was conducted among Chennai population with the sample size of 120, and finally, data were compiled and result was generated. The questionnaire is based on their frequency of daily physical activity, sedentary lifestyle, consuming junk foods, etc. All the data were collected and analyzed systematically for any association between the parameters involved. **Results:** The result shows that 61 of the total population have not even bothered to do any physical activity and the remaining 39% has several workout practices either daily or periodically twice a week. **Conclusion:** The sample population of the present generation is aware of the benefits of doing daily physical activity, but unluckily most of them do not practice any daily physical activity regularly.

KEY WORDS: Daily physical activity, Junk foods, Non-communicable diseases, Sedentary lifestyle, Young adults

INTRODUCTION

Physical activity can be defined as any movement of the body that requires energy expenditure. Any action that we do throughout the day comes under this except for sitting still or lying down.[1] By doing daily physical activity, we can enhance our health and decrease all causes of mortality rate by 30%.[2] Regular physical activity reduces the risk of getting cardiovascular disease up to 35%,[3] regulates type 2 diabetes up to 40%, colon cancer by 30%,[4] and breast cancer by 20%.[5] Most influencing risks such as depression, hip fractures, and dementia (memory loss) are reduced up to 30%, 68%, and 30%, respectively.[6]

Endorsing physical activity to the patients is the way of prevention of overall disease as well as it is one of the ways for treating hypertension, cholesterol, or obesity.[7] For the young adults, there are many environmental influences on physical activity levels, in that parents play a major role by restricting the independence level regarding about traffic, stranger danger, and youth's safety. This might hinder the young adult's ability to use parks and recreational facilities.[8] The parents are very specific about their child's safety and the quality of such neighborhood facilities. Therefore, parents play a prompting role in their child's use of these neighborhood conveniences.[9] There has been striking escalation in obesity rates in several developed countries. In spite of this amplified curiosity in physical activity, the current rates of involvement in various developed countries have persisted unaffected or have dropped.[10]

Severe efforts should be taken to surge physical activity contribution by setting up wakefulness campaigns, proficient education, and cohesive tactical planning.[11] In developed countries like Australia, preliminary paces were given initial importance in New South Wales (NSW) through interagency partnership developed by a statewide Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce in 1996. In 1998 and 1999, mass media movements were piloted initially in NSW (and in the Australian Capital Territory) to notify the inhabitants about the novel modest-intensity physical activity memo.[12] The NSW inventiveness

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was reinforced by Active Australia, then a budding national physical activity alliance. The February 1998 crusade resulted in short-term intensifications in awareness and indulgence of moderate physical activity, calculated within hardly a few weeks of the termination of the media module.[13]

The prevalence and frequency of daily physical activity among the health professionals and among medical students appear poor, although there is well aware of the beneficial effects of it.[14] The World Health Organization report quotes the dearth of physical activity as quarter most main cause of mortality globally. Worldwide, 31% of the beings elder than 15 grieve from sedentariness and 3.2 million expiries are credited to shortage of adequate physical activity.[15]

Fewer than a third of young adult population do sufficient physical activity to relish its welfares, but the extent of physical activity has dropped to startling low levels in all young age groups. Lack of movement is fairly common, in particular, social sets containing women, non-Europeans, lower socio-economic classes, and the elderly.[15] We hypothesized that most of the young adult population in the present generation are leading a sedentary lifestyle rather than practicing daily physical activities regularly.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted among Chennai population with the sample size of 120 comprising 53 males and 67 females of age group 18–35 years. The participants were given a questionnaire which comprised 22 questions which aided to assess the knowledge, awareness, and practice of daily physical activity among the young adult population. The participants were asked to complete the survey honestly. Finally, the data were compiled and statistical analysis was done.

RESULTS

From the survey questionnaire, it is inferred that among the 120 subjects, 32% of adult population said "yes," 61% said "no," and 21% said "used to do in the past" for the question on the frequency of practice of daily physical activity among young adults [Figure 1]. To evaluate the knowledge of the awareness of daily physical activity among young adults, 79% responded "yes," 16% said "no," and 25% said "may be" [Figure 2]. About the awareness of the problems caused by sedentary lifestyle, 101% responded "yes," 11% said "no," and 8% said "not bothered" [Figure 3].

The result shows that 61% of the total population has not even bothered to do any physical activity and the remaining 39% has several workout practices either daily or periodically twice a week. A few of the adult population are aware of the consequence of obesity and sedentary lifestyle. The responses obtained through various survey questions are analyzed and represented in graphical bar diagram format for easy interpretation which are shown in Figures 1-3.

Figure 1 implies that most of the population does not practice daily physical activity regularly. Figure 2 indicates that almost most of the population is well aware of the health benefits resulting due to daily physical activity. Figure 3 specifies that nearly all the

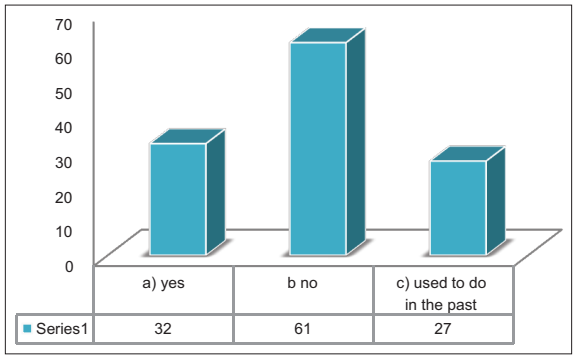

Figure 1: Practice of daily physical activity among young adults

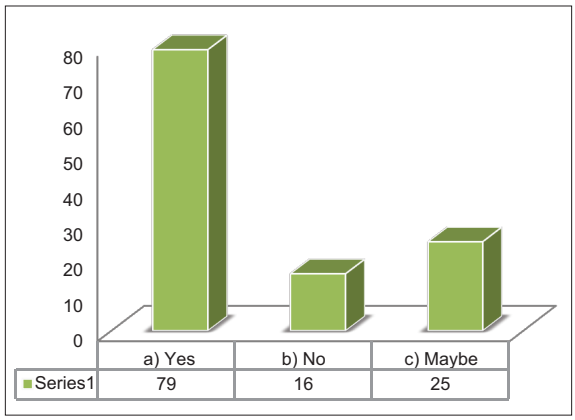

Figure 2: Awareness of daily physical activity among young adults

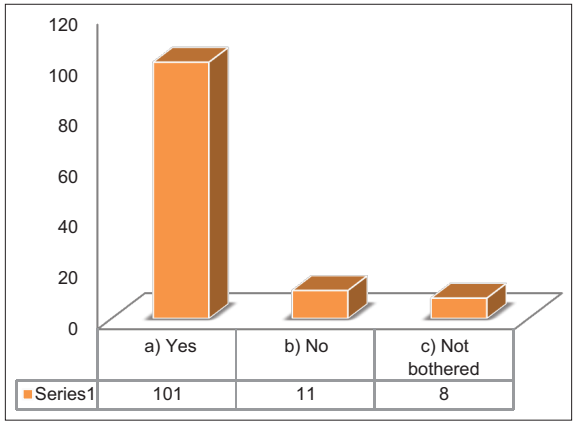

Figure 3: Awareness of the problems caused by sedentary lifestyle

adults are conscious about the problems caused by sedentary lifestyle.

DISCUSSION

The present data are consistent with past researches that imply that the young adults are not practicing physical activity habitually.[16] As hypothesized, the sample population has sufficient knowledge and awareness of the benefits of physical activity and on the problems caused by the sedentary lifestyle, but the prevalence and frequency of daily physical activity are poor.[17,18] Only 27% of the population does vigorous exercises to control their body weight and 92% have not even bothered to do so. About 56% of the population prefers to play a sport for the regular physical exercise, 44% desires walking or jogging, and 25% wishes bicycling. Fifty-four of the sample population found that laziness as the major barrier in doing daily physical activities. Moreover, the other minor barriers were found to be insufficient time (by 32 of the population) and work burden or stress (by 26 of the population).

About 47% of the adult individuals usually spend sitting or reclining for more than 2 h on a typical day, 37% of the beings spent 2 h a day resting. During weekends, 50 individuals prefer to roam around in malls with friends, 23 of them like to go for a film, and only the rest of the population desire playing sport. Doing physical activity specifically walking for 30 min at least 5 days per week has a noteworthy role in reducing and controlling blood pressure in patients with and without medication.[19] Studies have provided contradictory results regarding levels of physical activity during the changing seasons; however, weather has been reported as a barrier to physical activity.[20]

CONCLUSION

From the present study, it is obvious that the young adult population of the present generation is aware and is well knowledged about the benefits of doing daily physical activity, but unfortunately, most of them do not practice daily physical activity regularly due to laziness. The population of the present generation is aware of the benefits of doing daily physical activity, but under several lame circumstances, most of them do not practice any daily physical activity regularly.

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