



Need of Exercise and yoga during the COVID Period

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Abstract

The impact of this pandemic is massive, and the only strategy to curb the rapid spread of the disease is to follow social distancing. The imposed lockdown, resulting in the closure of business activities, public places, fitness, and activity centres, and overall social life, has hampered many aspects of the lives of people including routine fitness activities of fitness freaks, which has resulted in various psychological issues and serious fitness and health concerns. physical activity needs to be maintained as it is extremely beneficial to body and mind. It is important for controlling diabetes and high blood pressure. Maintaining bone strength and muscle tone through exercise is important especially as the regular outdoor activity is curtailed during the COVID -19 pandemic. Exercise also helps boost immunity reduces the risk of mental health issues like depression. You can walk for short periods such as 10 minutes at a time, or practise yoga routines or Interval training.

Introduction

This is the first time the whole world is affected simultaneously and struck strongly in a very short span of time. Initially, the death rate due to COVID-19 was around 4-6%, (World Health Organization [WHO]). The statistics does not look so severe, but the total number of cases and the rate at which these cases are increasing day by day make the situation alarming. Exponential growth in COVID-19 cases has led to the isolation of billions of people and worldwide lockdown. COVID-19 has affected the life of nearly each person around the world. The difference between personal or professional lives has narrowed due to work-from-home instructions, and people's lives are revolving around these two due to the lockdown. People have also been pondering over a vital concern at home, i.e., the importance of their health and fitness. Announcement of a sudden lockdown of all services and activities, except few essential services, by the authorities has resulted in a radical change in the lifestyle of affected people and has severely impaired their mental health, which has been manifested in the form of increased anxiety, stress, and depression. The sudden changes in people's lifestyle, include limited or no physical activities and exercise.



As a resulted decrease in all levels of physical activities and about 28% increase in daily sitting time as well as increase in unhealthy pattern of food consumption. It is important to note that physical activities and exercise not only maintain physical and psychological health but also help our body to respond to the negative consequences of several diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, and respiratory diseases. And due to the physical inactivity current pandemic restrictions is a major public health issue that is a prominent risk factor for decreased life expectancy and many physical health problems. It is observed that exercise is to keep other physical functions (respiratory, circulatory, muscular, nervous, and skeletal systems) intact and supports other systems (endocrine, digestive, immune, or renal systems) that are important in fighting any known or unknown threat to our body. It is found that regular exercise might significantly reduce the risk of acute respiratory distress syndrome, which is one of the main causes of death in COVID-19. However, when health promotion activities such as sports and regular gym exercises are not available in this pandemic situation, it is very difficult for individuals to meet the general WHO guidelines (150 min moderate to mild PA or 75 min intensive PA per week or combination of both).

EFFECT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ON MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-

This epidemic has forced many of us to spend more time at home, sitting down and abandoning our regular exercise routines. Experts are warning that this sudden change of behaviour toward a more sedentary lifestyle is putting our health at risk. The World Health Organization is renewing the call-to-action that we stay active in line with the established recommendations for physical activity. Furthermore, physical inactivity is a risk factor for many chronic conditions that contribute to the severity of COVID-19 (if you, unfortunately, contract the virus), e.g., cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and chronic lung disease. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention report that patients with underlying health conditions are six times more likely to be hospitalized due to COVID-19. They also have a 12 times higher death rate compared to people with no underlying conditions.

We are living with greater fear, worry, and psychological stress since the beginning of the epidemic. The adverse effects of lockdown on our collective mental health are apparent worldwide. The primary mental health complaints include:



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- Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Insomnia
 - Obsessive-compulsive disorders
 - Anger and irritability
 - Difficulty concentrating

Consider engaging in physical activity once or twice daily that includes brief periods (30-90 seconds) of greater intensity. For some, this might be accomplished through exercise in their homes including jumping jacks, mountain climbers, and sequencing strength training exercises (i.e. standing squats, push-ups, sit-ups). For others, the use of home exercise equipment such as treadmills, elliptical machines, and stationary bikes may be helpful.

Moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (such as speed-walking or jogging) has been shown to help reduce the use of alcohol and other substances. Additionally, participation in regular physical activity is to boost the immune and associated with improvement in the body's ability to fight off infection.

Variety of in-home activities (indoor cycling, treadmill running, dance cardio, yoga, strength training, and more) to help make exercise more enjoyable during this critical period and **using physical activity and exercise as a strategy to maintain health during this stressful period.** Regular physical exercise seems to be vital *now more than ever*. Those who are physically active appear to fare better in terms of mental health issues (related to the pandemic) than those who are not exercising. There is strong evidence to suggest that physical exercise helps prevent the adverse effects on mental health brought on by the stress of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Social and emotional well-being through regular exercise

Not forget the feelings of loneliness and boredom that are also common during our lockdown. Changes in emotional states and typical behaviour are being experienced by most of us. Younger people are suffering because of social distancing measures. Health clubs are a safe place to mitigate some of these concerns if the **“4W’s (wash your hands, wear a mask, workout six feet apart, and wipe your**



equipment)”are observed. Exercising in a real physical environment with other people helps build physical and mental resilience through safe social connection and participation in activity. Working out is also a good distraction from our current reality—a meaningful activity that can replace other fun activities that are possibly limited due to COVID-19 safety measures.

New exercise regimens that meet the safety requirements of the pandemic necessitate some creative adaptations. Nonetheless, the new health threats of COVID-19 have highlighted the fact that we need to do whatever it takes to engage in exercise and renewed our focus on the importance of keeping ourselves healthy. In fact, the physical, psychological, emotional, and social gains of physical exercise are more important now than ever have been before.

Conclusion

This study showed, a shift from the gym workout and fitness equipment toward substitutes is clearly visible during the latter part of the lockdown. After the initial confusion and passive wait for things to normalize, participants accepted the reality and started thinking about alternatives to exercises related to heavy gym equipment. Some of the alternatives listed by them included switching to yoga and meditation, high-intensity workout at home, and lifting heavy buckets, big water bottles, and skipping. All these alternative arrangements not only helped individuals maintain their daily exercise routine but also contributed to their physical and mental health. Experts recommended 150–300 min of aerobic exercise per week and two sessions per week of moderate-intensity muscle strength exercises for people to be physically active during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, it also found that listening to music was an effective aid to keep themselves engaged as they exercised. This also support that music helps people to continue their fitness workout for a significantly longer period. It shown that music creates an ergogenic effect during physical and cognitive performance and is linked to heightened motivation and engagement and lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. It is therefore clear that listening to music while doing physical exercise during the current pandemic has enabled people to focus on the exercise without any distraction from the home setting and has enabled them to create their own world, where there is no COVID-19.



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