

Physical activity and children's health

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Abstract

A sedentary lifestyle contributes to the increased prevalence of chronic diseases in childhood. Promoting physical activity as a factor in improving child health is a necessity for the contemporary world. Outdoor physical activity, which was the main activity of children, has been replaced in recent decades by the use of computer games, internet and school activities with increased requirements. It is known that physical activity reduces the risk of premature mortality by cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, colon cancer, depression and anxiety.

Paediatricians, school doctors and family physicians have an important role in the management of child obesity, comorbidities and other chronic diseases of children, but they cannot succeed alone. For the success of any program of lifestyle intervention the collaboration between doctors, parents, teachers, government and non-governmental organizations and especially children is required. The promotion of lifelong habits related to physical activity to achieve sustained weight control, rather than by short bouts of aerobic exercise is recommended. Effective decrease of weight is facilitated through regular physical activity, which requires a change of mentality to be successful.

Physical activity improves the health of children and may be a practical way for paediatricians to treat or prevent certain chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes mellitus, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, cardiovascular diseases.

Keywords: physical activity, health, children, obesity, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.