

The Impact of Regular Exercise on Overall Health During the Covid-19 Pandemic**Onur Oral**^{1*}, **Zeinab Rezaee**², **George N. Nomikos**³, **Pinar Tatlibal**⁴, **Nikitas N. Nomikos**⁵¹ Ege University, Faculty of Sports Sciences, Izmir, Turkey.² Department of Exercise Physiology, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran.³ Chios Hospital, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Chios, Greece.⁴ Dokuz Eylül University, Necat Hepkon Faculty of Sports Sciences, Izmir, Turkey.⁵ School of Physical Education & Sport Science, Medical School, National & Kapodistrian University.***Corresponding Author:** Onur ORAL, Ege University, Faculty of Sports Sciences, Izmir, Turkey.**Received Date:** 18 October 2023 | **Accepted Date:** 30 October 2023 | **Published Date:** 13 November 2023**Citation:** Onur Oral, Zeinab Rezaee, George N. Nomikos, Pinar Tatlibal, Nikitas N. Nomikos (2023), The Impact of Regular Exercise on Overall Health During the Covid-19 Pandemic, *J. Endocrinology and Disorders*, 7(7): DOI:10.31579/2640-1045/160**Copyright:** © 2023, Onur Oral. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.**Abstract****Background:** In this study, the positive contributions of regular exercise habits and physical activity to physiological and psychological health during the Covid 19 pandemic are emphasised.**Materials and Methods:** In the search for scientific literature for this review, data from the US National Library of Medicine (PubMed), MEDLINE, and SportDiscus were used, and the terms “psychological health”, “mental health”, “physical activity”, “Covid 19”, and “overall health” were used. The relevant literature has also taken its source from the research of relevant articles from reference lists derived from data searches**Results:** It has been observed that regular exercise habits are important components that contribute to maintaining a physiologically and psychologically healthy lifestyle during the Covid 19 pandemic,**Conclusion:** With the contribution of the experiences during the Covid 19 pandemic, increasing social awareness about the relationship between regular exercise and physical activity habits and quality of life, and knowing the important health outcomes related to regular exercise and physical activity habits can clarify their impact on public health. In order to improve healthy life and quality of life, it is of great importance to develop social strategies to encourage regular exercise and physical activity habits and to gain lifelong regular exercise habits to the whole society.**Key words:** physical activity; psychological health; Covid 19; mental health; overall health**Introduction**

The link between regular exercise and mental health has long been recognised. Numerous scientific studies have highlighted the benefits of regular exercise and physical activity on psychological and mental health. The importance of maintaining good mental health in today's fast-paced, tiring and stressful world cannot be overstated.

It will be recalled that during the pandemic, mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety have become increasingly common around the world (Śniadach, et al., 2020). They affect people of all ages and from all walks of life. That's why it's so important to raise awareness of the mood-boosting benefits of exercising regularly and how it affects mental health. The impact of regular physical activity

on mental health and well-being during this unprecedented global health crisis highlights the important role that physical activity plays in maintaining overall health and well-being, particularly in challenging times such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic (Gao & Lee, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only posed significant risks to physical health, but has also had a detrimental effect on mental health due to factors such as quarantine, limited socialization and uncertainty about the future (Shah, et al., 2020). It is therefore important to understand how regular exercise can help reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety and promote better mental health outcomes for individuals during these difficult times (Shah, et

al., 2020; Byrne, et al., 2021). During the pandemic, these conditions became more common as a result of a variety of stressors. These included job insecurity, financial strain, fear of contracting the virus or losing loved ones. It will be recalled that mood disorders, characterised by a pervasive sense of sadness or loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, were common throughout the world during this period, and excessive worry or anxiety about real or imagined situations that might adversely affect an individual's well-being, psychological and mental health tended to be on the increase (Gasparro, et al., 2020).

The physical, psychological and mental health of people around the world has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, quarantine measures imposed by governments around the world have resulted in restricted movement, limited social interaction, isolation from loved ones and disrupted daily routines. It was clear that people from all walks of life were experiencing increased feelings of loneliness, anxiety, stress and depression as a result of the disruption to their daily routines (Chen, et al., 2022; Son, et al., 2020).

Regular physical activity can be defined as any sport or physical activity that is performed in a programmed manner, within a planned period of time, and is structured and regulated according to scientific methods. The positive effects of regular exercise on general physical health are well known, but the benefits go beyond physical fitness and also play an important role in promoting good mental health (Barton & Pretty, 2010). Regular exercise promotes the release of endorphins, natural chemicals produced by the body that make us feel happy and positive. Regular exercise also helps to reduce stress by reducing the production of stress hormones, such as cortisol, and by promoting relaxation. So, it is clear that physical activity can play an important role in helping to manage mild to moderate mental health problems, particularly depression and anxiety. Although depressed people are less likely to be physically active than non-depressed people, it can be predicted that engaging in regular physical activity will significantly reduce depressive symptoms (Paluska, & Schwenk, 2000).

Discussion:

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on both the physical and mental health of people worldwide. Widespread mental health problems such as depression and anxiety have resulted from the social distancing, isolation and increased stress levels associated with the pandemic (Cullen et al., 2020; Dubey et al., 2020)

It has been shown that individuals' inclusion of regular physical activity in their daily routines contributes positively to mental health. As a matter of fact, regular exercise has been observed to benefit mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic (Wang et al., 2020), numerous studies show a significant increase in mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. As is well known, all aspects of society, including mental and physical health, have been deeply affected by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The social uncertainty, economic hardship and social isolation brought about by the pandemic have contributed to increased stress levels among individuals globally (Holmes et al., 2020).

Mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety are known to have increased significantly during the COVID 19 pandemic. People around the world are experiencing increased stress due to uncertainty, economic problems and social isolation. It is important to proactively address these issues to mitigate the serious consequences for overall well-being. (Lu & Lin, 2021).

Regular physical activity plays an important role in maintaining your overall health and fitness, no matter what your medical condition may be. Not only does exercise help to improve your cardiovascular fitness, strength, endurance, flexibility and cognitive function, but it also has a number of benefits for your mental health. Exercise has been shown to be effective in the reduction of symptoms of depression and anxiety, and can have a positive impact on the quality of life (Andersson et al., 2015; Oral et al., 2022). It also helps to improve mood and boost self-esteem. Physical activity also reduces stress and helps people to develop better ways of coping with it (Mahindru et al., 2023; Swan & Hyland 2012) It also has a positive effect on mental and emotional wellbeing by reducing symptoms associated with a range of mental health conditions (Huppert, 2009; Mackenzie & Williams, 2018).

Exercise has been shown to have a positive effect on psychological wellbeing during challenging times such as the pandemic. In people with COVID-19 limitations, regular exercise has been shown to be associated with significant reductions in anxiety and depressive symptoms (Wolf et al., 2012). Thus, while it was important for individuals to exercise regularly as part of their daily routine during the COVID 19 epidemic to protect and improve their mental health, it is also important to consider the positive psychological contributions of regular exercise after the COVID 19 epidemic. (Jimeno-Almazán et al., 2021)

Conclusion:

Regular exercise and physical activity have long been recognised as an important part of the maintenance of a mentally healthy lifestyle. Numerous research studies have demonstrated the general health benefits associated with regular physical activity, including improved cardiovascular health, weight management, mental and psychological health, and improved quality of life. Increasing public awareness of the relationship between regular exercise and physical activity habits and quality of life, and recognising the important health outcomes associated with regular exercise and physical activity habits, can improve public health. To improve health and quality of life, it is important to develop societal strategies to promote regular exercise and physical activity habits and to establish lifelong regular exercise habits throughout society.

As experienced almost all over the world, in order to protect and improve physical, mental and psychological health during the Covid 19 pandemic, the importance of regular exercise and physical activity not only in health facilities but also in various environments such as homes, workplaces, educational institutions and community centres should not be underestimated. For example, healthy living and

exercise programmes in workplaces have shown very positive results for public health. Health professionals have also played an active role in providing education on the importance of sportive activity and physical activity by implementing treatment methods focusing on lifestyle changes, which has contributed to the spread of physical activity habit as a treatment method to the whole society. For children, the inclusion of extracurricular sports activities in the curricula of educational institutions and the implementation of programmes that encourage students to participate in daily physical education classes have made a significant contribution to children's acquisition of physical activity habits at an early age and to the physical, mental and psychological health of children during and after the Covid 19 pandemic.

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