



Impacts of physical activity and exercise on physical and mental health in older adults during covid-19 pandemic: a review of literature

Poster Presentation

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Abstract

Introduction: Ageing is typically associated with some declines in physical and mental health, considered one of the major risks for most serious diseases (1). Novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) negatively impacts older individuals' health, leading to increased mortality risk (2). Previous research has shown that a physically active lifestyle prevents the age-associated decline of the immune system (3). The COVID-19 lockdown resulted in reduced physical activity levels and increased risk of physical and mental health problems in older adults (4). Therefore, the present study aimed to review the existing literature on the impacts of physical activity and exercise on physical and mental health in older adults during the pandemic.

Methods: The present study reviews previous research findings on the impacts of physical activity and exercise on physical and mental health in older adults during the Covid-19 pandemic. For this review study, we thoroughly conducted a search of the extant literature based on the aim of the study from August 2020 to February 2021 through several academic web search engines such as Google Scholar, SID, PubMed. Physical activity, exercise, physical health, mental health, aging, older adults, elderly, COVID-19, Coronavirus were searched as keywords. After searching and screening the articles for inclusion, we reviewed the relevant articles.

Results: The results of this review showed that regular physical activity and structured exercise programs such as home-based exercises could improve physical and mental health in older adults by boosting the immune system, controlling body mass index (BMI), reducing symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression, and improving quality of life during the pandemic.

Conclusion: Overall, this literature review indicates that physical activity and exercise can positively impact on improving physical and mental health, and consequently reducing the risk of the Covid-19 infection in aging populations.

Keywords

Physical activity; exercise; Aging; Older adults; Physical and Mental health; COVID-19

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