



The Importance of Physical Exercise in Covid-19 Pandemic

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Opinion

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The pandemic caused by the novel corona virus, named by the world health organization (WHO) COVID-19, presented among acute viral infections, with a high rate of transmission, especially in the elderly population, risk-factors carriers and cardiovascular, pulmonary, renal and immunological comorbidities. Currently, it is considered a major public health issue because it causes a great burden on the health system, especially in the high complexity.

It is known that social distance and the use of masks can help prevent transmission and increase the number of cases, and so far, there is no cure or vaccines. Therefore, public strategies were declared by governments to prevent viral spread, through lockdown or quarantine, demanding people to stay at home and streets, gyms, parks to be closed. Although they are beneficial strategies in reducing the pandemic, these measures have become a risk factor for COVID-19, as they increase physical inactivity and sedentarism. These are important factors for the potential aggravation of chronic diseases characterized by inflammation, accumulation of visceral fat and increased inflammatory markers, such as interleukin-6, culminating in systemic inflammation.

Thus, maintaining an active status has become a challenge during the outbreak of COVID-19, since it is essential that physical exercise is encouraged during this period, turning health professionals, such as physical educators and physiotherapists, into creative professionals for the preparation of training sessions at the clients and patients' homes. By maintaining a physically active lifestyle, you can help prevent COVID-19-related inflammatory responses by increasing immune and anti-inflammatory responses in the human body.

There is still no scientific data on how physical activity can improve the immune responses to COVID-19 itself, but it is

known that physical activity and exercise, when well oriented and performed, increase the synthesis of anti-inflammatory cytokines and contribute to decrease the production of pro-inflammatory cytokines, improving host defense to COVID-19. In addition, regular exercise of moderate intensity for a long period plays an important role in the prevention of chronic diseases, due to its anti-inflammatory effects, as well as other health conditions, through the modulation of the immune system. Because of this, it is recommended in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to reduce the impacts on physical inactivity during this period, it is recommended that the population performs at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise or at least 20 minutes of vigorous exercise daily, preferably performing a combination of both intensities. Exercises, such as aerobics (through walking in the courtyard and in the rooms or going up and down stairs), strength (squats, sitting and getting up from the sofa or chair, performing movements with objects, pull-ups, push-ups and abdominal exercises), combined (aerobic and strength), balance, multicomponent (aerobic, strength, stretching, mobility and coordination), alternatives (yoga, Pilates, etc.) and using technology through platforms and smartphones are highly recommended.

In addition, the stress and anxiety that people are experiencing from staying at home, they are likely to have many other related health problems. Therefore, these are other factors to be considered for the strong recommendation for physical exercise.

Finally, exercise may not prevent us from developing COVID-19, but scientific evidence of other viral infections indicates that physically active people will have less severe symptoms, shorter recovery times, may be less likely to infect others and exercise better control over your latent viral

infections, even during periods of isolation and confinement. Moreover, it can counteract the negative effects of isolation

and stress and, therefore, must be highly promoted during this critical period which we live in.

