

HEALTH-IMPROVING POTENTIAL OF PHYSICAL CULTURE AND SPORTS

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ANNOTATION: The article highlights the role and significance of physical culture and sports in strengthening human health. It emphasizes that health has traditionally been interpreted in harmony with beauty and physical perfection, and presents information on the preventive and therapeutic effects of sports. The positive influence of simple walking on the cardiovascular, respiratory, and nervous systems is described on a scientific basis.

The study analyzes the results of a sociological survey conducted among university students, identifying their attitudes toward a healthy lifestyle and sports, as well as the level of their knowledge and skills related to health. Furthermore, the physiological, psychological, and social importance of active and sports games is revealed. In particular, the role of popular sports such as football and basketball in developing endurance, speed, attention, teamwork, and moral integrity is demonstrated.

As a conclusion, it is noted that sport and physical culture are of great importance not only for strengthening health, but also for fostering the moral and social qualities of young people.

In recent years, the development of sports and physical culture, as well as the formation of a healthy lifestyle among the population, especially the younger generation, has been regarded as one of the priority directions of state policy in our country. As our President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has emphasized: “A healthy generation is the future of the nation, the foundation of national progress.” Therefore, in our republic, significant documents are being adopted to promote a healthy lifestyle, develop sports infrastructure, and improve all forms of physical education [1].

For instance, the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5037 dated June 3, 2017, approved the “Program of measures for the development of physical culture and mass sports.” This program contributed to the further expansion of mass sports in the country, the increase of physical activity among the population, and the systematic organization of health promotion through sports [2].

Furthermore, the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-3583, adopted on March 5, 2018, “On measures for the radical improvement of the management system in the field of physical education and sports,” set forth the tasks of widely engaging children and adolescents in sports, increasing the effectiveness of physical education lessons in schools and higher education institutions, and holding regular sports competitions [3].

On January 24, 2020, President Sh. Mirziyoyev’s initiative “The wide implementation of a healthy lifestyle and the development of mass sports” marked a new stage. Within this initiative, the project “10,000 steps a day” was launched, with special attention paid to improving the effectiveness of health promotion through simple walking exercises [4].

Moreover, the Presidential Decree No. PF-76, adopted in 2025, “On additional measures to ensure the quality of education and improve the system of educational services,” also reflected the sphere of physical culture and sports. The document defined tasks such as promoting physical culture as an important factor in youth education, increasing the share of health-improving exercises in curricula, and introducing international experience [5].

Thus, these decrees and resolutions adopted by the Head of our State serve as a strong foundation for expanding the health-improving opportunities of physical culture and sports, as

well as supporting the striving of the population, especially young people, toward a healthy lifestyle. This further strengthens the relevance of our research.

Health is recognized as the greatest wealth in human life. Since ancient times, health has been interpreted in harmony with beauty and aesthetics. Both in literature and in scientific works on medicine and physical culture, health, beauty, and physical perfection have been described as interrelated processes. Therefore, the role of sports and physical culture in the lifestyle of society members is invaluable.

Today, there are various popular types of sports, but scientific studies on their health-improving effects are not widely known to the public. Since the promotion of physical culture among the population is not always organized systematically, the preventive and therapeutic importance of sports is not being fully utilized. For example, in daily life, simple walking, commuting to work and home on foot, and climbing stairs instead of using elevators in multi-story buildings can serve as a form of health training. If the positive effects of such exercises on health were widely promoted, members of society could benefit more effectively.

From a medical perspective, almost all major muscle groups are engaged during ordinary walking. This activates the circulatory system and even expands the smallest blood vessels. As a result, the heart muscle receives additional blood supply. Due to the intensified arterial blood flow, tissues and the heart muscle receive better nourishment, and overall blood circulation is enhanced.

At the same time, walking exercises increase lung ventilation, enlarge the volume of exhaled air, and deepen breathing. This improves oxygen supply to the body. Since oxygen is the main “elixir of life” for the heart muscle, this reduces the risk of heart aging and heart attacks, helping to preserve health for a longer time.

Walking not only benefits the cardiovascular system but also positively affects the nervous system. It calms the nerves, balances excitation and inhibition processes, and alleviates stress and nervous tension. In this regard, walking is considered an inexpensive and natural method of preventing neurological diseases.

Experts recommend that in order to prevent heart attacks and other cardiovascular diseases, a person should walk at least 8–10 km per day. Of course, this figure may vary depending on individual health conditions. For beginners, it is recommended to start with 500 meters per day (N. Savin, 1990). Later, women are advised to gradually add 250 meters per week, and men 500 meters per week. The walking pace should also be gradually increased: initially 60–70 steps per minute, after one month 100 steps, and later 120–130 steps per minute. When the pace reaches 140–150 steps per minute, the exercise has a physiological effect similar to light jogging.

A sociological survey conducted among final-year students of Fergana State University, Andijan State University, and Kokand State Pedagogical Institute (involving more than 300 students, 60% of them female) revealed students’ attitudes toward health and sports. Of the respondents, 59% rated their health as “good” or “excellent,” 34.5% as satisfactory, 3.2% as unsatisfactory, and 1.8% as very unsatisfactory. However, follow-up questions showed that their views on their own health were often subjective. For instance, 50% reported suffering from various illnesses during the year.

It was also found that most students lack deep knowledge about their own health. Only 37.1% of participants knew their heart rate norms, and just 15.4% were aware of normal blood pressure levels. Meanwhile, 66.5% admitted that they did not have the skills to assess their own physical fitness level.

In the system of physical culture, active and sports games play a leading role as important tools. The distinction between “active” and “sports” games is conditional. Active games are often organized in various places and situations with simpler rules, while sports games are held in

fields of specific dimensions and based on strict rules. From a physiological perspective, sports games are broader and more effective compared to active games.

Highly skilled athletes perform movements that require great energy during games. This strongly affects the central nervous system, muscles, visual and motor analyzers, as well as internal organs. For example, running, jumping, passing, throwing, and receiving the ball in football or basketball engage large muscle groups and activate the respiratory and circulatory systems.

In the process of games, workloads alternate with short rest periods. This prevents excessive fatigue and contributes to the development of all physical qualities. In particular, the central nervous system improves its ability to adapt to various conditions.

The activation of the central nervous system also stimulates the sympathetic nervous system and endocrine glands. They produce hormones that act as natural biostimulants for the body. As a result, a person feels energetic, vigorous, and active. Therefore, outdoor sports games are especially beneficial for young people, girls, and those who lead sedentary lifestyles.

Interestingly, even a very tired person, when engaged in a sports game, begins to feel refreshed within a short time. This demonstrates the importance of games in psychological recovery. The energy spent during the day can be restored in the course of a sports game. Hence, sports games are significant not only as a means of physical but also psychological recovery.

During games, situations change rapidly, and participants must make correct decisions and act quickly. This helps develop vital skills such as quick thinking, problem-solving, and decision adjustment. Indeed, life often presents unexpected situations, and sports games prepare individuals for such conditions.

While playing as a team, young people learn to strive toward a common goal, support each other, take responsibility, show leadership, and sometimes sacrifice personal interests. Thus, sports games develop not only physical but also moral, ethical, and social skills.

Football and mini-football are among the most popular sports games among young people. On the field, two teams compete intensely, develop tactical plans, and demonstrate creativity. A football player must endure heavy physical loads. According to scientific studies, in the 1970s–80s, first-league players ran an average of 7–18 km per game, while nowadays, under the conditions of “total football,” this figure has doubled. Intensity has also increased 1.5 times.

Football requires not only physical endurance but also moral maturity. A player must demonstrate himself both physically and spiritually.

Basketball, which mainly involves hand movements, develops many muscle groups and enhances speed and accuracy. Participants develop mobility, attention, reaction speed, and endurance. Basketball also requires discipline and adherence to ethical principles such as respect for opponents.

Volleyball, with its simplicity and engaging rules, attracts many participants. It engages various muscle groups and develops teamwork skills.

As noted above, active and sports games are among the main tools of a healthy lifestyle within physical culture. They develop not only physical but also moral and psychological qualities. Sports games are of great importance in shaping a healthy lifestyle among young people, educating a well-rounded generation, and increasing social activity in society.

Based on the above information, it can be concluded that the correct understanding and evaluation of physical culture and sports as a means of health promotion in society is still not sufficiently formed. Some students believe that sports and physical culture are necessary only for physical development. Others think that sports overstrain the body and negatively affect intellectual activity.

In reality, regular physical activities – walking, running, hiking, sports training – improve not only physical qualities but also general health. They strengthen the respiratory and circulatory systems, stabilize the nervous system, and prevent various diseases.

Therefore, it is necessary to more actively promote the importance of physical culture and sports among the general public, and to strengthen awareness campaigns among students and young people on forming a healthy lifestyle. This is an important factor not only for individual health but also for the sustainable development of society as a whole.

Literature

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