

## **THE ROLE OF A SPORT IN A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE**

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**Abstract:** Sport and physical activity are important factors for health care, disease prevention, and overall quality of life. This article examines the effects of physical activity on cardiovascular, metabolic, and mental health; the relationship between types of sport, intensity levels, and health outcomes; and issues of individual adaptation according to age, sex, and socio-economic status. International and local literature are analyzed and the achievements and practical recommendations of leading researchers are compared. Finally, recommendations are made for promoting sport within health systems and for expanding scientific research.

**Keywords:** Sport, physical activity, healthy lifestyle, prevention, health care, physical activity guidelines

### **Introduction**

The primary goal of health care is to improve people’s overall health and to prevent disease. Today, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and mental health problems account for a large share of the global burden. Physical activity and sport play an important role in both preventing and treating these conditions. The World Health Organization’s 2020 global recommendations on physical activity reaffirm the importance of physical activity for health. This article systematically reviews the effects, mechanisms, and practical recommendations regarding sport and health based on existing international and local literature.

International research and leading researchers’ work

**Kenneth H. Cooper:** One of the most prominent figures who popularized aerobic exercise and promoted physical activity from the perspective of preventive medicine. His book “Aerobics” and early works (1960s–1970s) helped to popularize physical activity as a means of improving health.

**Min Lee and colleagues:** Their large global analysis of physical inactivity documents its impact on major chronic diseases and life expectancy; they note that insufficient physical activity is an important contributor to the burden of disease.

**Warburton, Nicol, Bredin,** as well as ACSM (American College of Sports Medicine) and WHO: Numerous reviews and guidelines from these authors and organizations

consistently support the broad health benefits of physical activity (cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular strength, bone density, weight management, and mental health).

**Cardiometabolic effects:** Regular aerobic and resistance exercise strengthens the cardiovascular system, lowers blood pressure, improves the lipid profile, and increases insulin sensitivity; these effects are well documented in numerous epidemiological and experimental studies.

**Muscle and endocrine effects:** Physical activity stimulates the release of myokines (for example, IL 6); these molecules participate in anti inflammatory and metabolic pathways — a concept developed by B. K. Pedersen.

**Weight and bone health:** Resistance training and weight bearing sports help maintain bone mineral density and reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

**Mental health:** Exercise reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety, and improves cognitive function and sleep. Mechanisms include increased neurotrophic factors, improved stress homeostasis, and beneficial social interactions.

**Exercise types and recommended doses:** Aerobic activities such as brisk walking, running, swimming, and cycling are highly beneficial for cardiovascular health. A weekly target of at least 150–300 minutes of moderate intensity activity or 75–150 minutes of vigorous intensity activity is recommended. Strength training for the major muscle groups is recommended at least two or more sessions per week to improve strength, endurance, and functional capacity. Infectious diseases, post operative states, or chronic conditions require tailored programs under medical supervision.

**Age and sex specific adaptation:** Children and adolescents should have at least 60 minutes per day of active play and sport. Older adults should include balance and strength exercises to reduce frailty and fall risk.

**Mental and social aspects:** Physical activity supports mental well being by reducing stress, enhancing self esteem, and improving social integration. Research shows that sport and exercise significantly reduce depressive symptoms.

**Context in Uzbekistan:** Compared with the international literature, research in Uzbekistan is largely focused on applied sports science, public health programs, and student health. Local health and educational institutions (universities, sports institutes) are developing programs to promote physical activity, but their outcomes

and large scale evaluations are limited relative to international standard epidemiological studies.

**Practical recommendations:** Increase weekly physical activity with a combination of cardio and strength training; progressively raise intensity; and reduce harmful sedentary behavior. For the health system: integrate sport into prevention programs, develop public spaces and infrastructure, and promote physical education in schools and active living at workplaces. In Uzbekistan, it is recommended to establish national level physical activity monitoring, conduct interventional trials, and study chronobiological adaptation.

**Conclusion:** Sport and physical activity are central components of health care: they reduce cardiometabolic disease risk, improve mental health, and enhance quality of life.

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