

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: PREVENTION AND SUPPORT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DEPRESSION

AKTYWNOŚĆ FIZYCZNA: PROFILAKTYKA I WSPOMAGANIE WALKI Z DEPRESJĄ

Aleksandra Ochotnicka^{1(A,B,C,D,E,F)}, Anita Marcinkiewicz^{2(A,B,C,D,E,F)}

¹ Florian Ceynowa Specialist Hospital in Wejherowo, Poland

² Dr Alfred Sokolowski Specialist Hospital in Walbrzych, Poland

Authors' contribution

Wkład autorów:

A. Study design/planning
zaplanowanie badań

B. Data collection/entry
zebranie danych

C. Data analysis/statistics
dane – analiza i statystyki

D. Data interpretation
interpretacja danych

E. Preparation of manuscript
przygotowanie artykułu

F. Literature analysis/search
wyszukiwanie i analiza literatury

G. Funds collection
zebranie funduszy

Dear Editor,

After reviewing the study conducted by Marszałek et al. [1], which focuses on physical activity as a supportive form for emotional intelligence in the treatment of depressive disorders, we believe that this work addresses a topic of significant importance to both physicians and patients – the utility of physical activity in preventing and treating depression.

Depression is a leading mental illness, causing disability worldwide. From 1990 to 2017, the global incidence of depression increased by almost 50% [2]. Limited social awareness causes delayed reporting of patients to specialists and delayed treatment. Depression often leads to suicidal acts among the affected individuals, with suicides being one of the main causes of death among young people. The primary methods of treating this condition include antidepressant medication and psychotherapy alone or in combination. Due to the constant rise in incidences, it is necessary to explore new treatment possibilities and prevent the development of depression [3].

Currently known risk factors for depression include stress, low level of emotional intelligence, family history of depression, family dysfunction, social difficulties, and a neurotic personality [4]. Current research suggests that a low level of emotional intelligence contributes to the development of depression due to reduced awareness of, and ability to cope with, emotions. It has been shown that such individuals have fewer connections between the anterior-medial prefrontal cortex and areas involved in emotion regulation. Affected individuals are less capable of engaging in positive social interactions, which may contribute to the development of depressive disorders [5].

Keywords: emotional intelligence, physical activity, sport, depression, prevention

Słowa kluczowe: inteligencja emocjonalna, aktywność fizyczna, sport, depresja, profilaktyka

Tables: 0

Figures: 0

References: 5

Submitted: 2024 Jan 14

Accepted: 2024 Jan 15

Published Online: 2024 Jan 29

Ochotnicka A, Marcinkiewicz A. Physical activity: prevention and support in the fight against depression. Health Prob Civil. 2024; 18(1): 3-4. <https://doi.org/10.5114/hpc.2024.134586>

Address for correspondence / Adres korespondencyjny: Aleksandra Ochotnicka, Florian Ceynowa Specialist Hospital in Wejherowo, dr. A. Jagalskiego 10, 84-200 Wejherowo, Poland, e-mail: olaochotnicka@gmail.com, phone: +48 58 572 70 00

ORCID: Aleksandra Ochotnicka <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-9560-3078>, Anita Marcinkiewicz <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8726-548X>

Copyright: ©John Paul II University in Biala Podlaska, Aleksandra Ochotnicka, Anita Marcinkiewicz. This is an Open Access journal, all articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>), allowing third parties to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and to remix, transform, and build upon the material, provided the original work is properly cited and states its license.

In a study conducted by Marszałek et al. [1], it was demonstrated that highly developed emotional intelligence helps overcome difficult life situations, reducing the negative psychological effects of such events. Depression arises from problems in processing emotional stimuli, so learning to recognize one's own emotions protects against the development of depression [1].

Long-term stress weakens brain plasticity, slowing nerve conduction and brain reconstructive processes. Moreover, prolonged and increased cortisol release during stress leads to hippocampal damage. It has been proven that individuals with depression experience a decrease in the volume of this brain structure, while physical exercise leads to an increase in hippocampal volume [1].

In Marszałek et al.'s work [1], it was shown that physical activity supports the development of emotional intelligence, and regular training protects against behavioral disorders. In a group of individuals involved in team sports, a lower incidence of depressive disorders and lower stress levels were demonstrated. Additionally, regular engagement in sports influences an increase in self-confidence and self-awareness [1].

The findings of Marszałek et al.'s study [1] indicate a strong correlation between physical activity and better mental health. Evidence shows that introducing a rational amount of physical activity can play a significant role in the prevention and support of depression treatment. The authors rightly emphasize the need for further, more detailed research to determine appropriate preventive and therapeutic strategies in the treatment of this disease using physical activity [1].

References:

1. Marszałek A, Walaszek R, Kasperczyk T. Physical activity as a form of support for emotional intelligence in the treatment of depressive disorders: a review of current studies. *Health Prob Civil*. Forthcoming 2024. <https://doi.org/10.5114/hpc.2023.132014>
2. Liu Q, He H, Yang J, Feng X, Zhao F, Lyu J. Changes in the global burden of depression from 1990 to 2017: findings from the Global Burden of Disease study. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*. 2020; 126: 134-140. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2019.08.002>
3. Cuijpers P, Quero S, Dowrick C, Arroll B. Psychological treatment of depression in primary care: recent developments. *Curr Psychiatry Rep*. 2019; 21(12): 129. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-019-1117-x>
4. Hammen C. Risk factors for depression: an autobiographical review. *Annu Rev Clin Psychol*. 2018; 14: 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-050817-084811>
5. Fernández-Berrocal P, Extremera N. Ability emotional intelligence, depression, and well-being. *Emotion Review*. 2016; 8(4): 311-315. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073916650494>