

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH OF OLDER ADULTS: CASE OF LITHUANIA

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Background

The rapid demographic ageing is a reality of Western Europe, where within 25 years half the population will be over 50, one quarter over 65 years old. According to statistics, in 2020 almost 20 percent of the population of Lithuania is 65 years old or over. This demographic transition requires more public attention to healthy aging (WHO, 2019).

Objectives of study – active ageing strategies with the aim to reveal the links between physical activity and health of older people.

Methods

To evaluate the physical activity of older adults, an adapted community questionnaire for healthy physical activity model for seniors (CHAMPS) was utilized, to assess health – the SF-36 questionnaire and the Hygiene Institute adult lifestyle questionnaire were used. Disease classes were also presented according to the ICD-10-AM systemic list of diseases. The study was conducted in January 2019, at Universities of Third Age in Telšiai and Klaipėda (Lithuania). 250 questionnaires were distributed during the survey, 123 of which were filled in correctly. All persons were elderly - 65 years old or over. The average age of respondents was 71.7 (\pm 4.9) years.

Results

Older people most frequently tend to do light work at home (97.6%), read (95.1%), go for a walk in order to complete certain tasks (92.7%), spend time with friends and family (91.9%), attend various events (80.5%), use a computer (77.2%), go for an easy walk to exercise or for enjoyment (74.8%), attend church (67.5%), do stretches or flexibility exercises (65.9%), walk fast (62.6%), visit a senior centre (59.3%), and do hard work at home (59.3%).

Older people are predominantly affected by connective tissue and musculoskeletal disorders (56.1%), circulatory system diseases (49.6%) and diseases of the eye and the ocular adnexa (46.3%). 27.6 % have diseases of the reproductive and urinary systems, 26.8 % indicated that they had suffered injuries and poisonings.



Conclusion

1. The analysis of study results revealed and confirmed direct relation between the physical activity and health of older people. Older people, who are more likely to attend group meetings, work hard in the garden and run slowly, complain less about endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases.
2. More active people are less likely to complain of depressed mood, anxiety, nervousness, fatigue and restrictions on social activities.