

Original Article

Perception and practice of walking exercise in morning walkers.

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Abstract:

Walking is the mostly preferred form of exercise for all ages. Brisk walking [5-6 kilometer per hour] for 30-60 minutes is an ideal one for a healthy person. A lot of people in urban Bangladesh do morning walk for cheering good health. This descriptive study was carried out among 208 morning walkers in Rajshahi Metropolitan area, selected purposively and was interviewed with a pre-tested close ended questionnaire for appraisal of their knowledge and practice of morning walking. The mean age of the respondents was 45.78 ± 13.01 years and majority of them (54.33%) had health problems including diabetes (35.58%). Almost all (92.30%) preferred walking in the morning. Majority respondents (64.42%) walked every day in the week and 64.90% spent one hour daily for it. Among the respondents, majority (60.58 %) had knowledge of one hour daily walking and 55.77% knew that daily walking coverage for two kilometers was the ideal. Only 3.63% of the morning walkers were found walked briskly and were scientifically correct in their practice. Most of the respondents with health problems had consulted with physicians but did not get proper guideline for walking. Physicians should advice their patients with detail about walking considering the age and the disease if they think it necessary. Health education program for acceptance of walking with correct information should be initiated and broadcast in mass media for general people.

Key words: Perception, Practice, Exercise, Morning walking,.

Introduction:

Walking is the mostly preferred form of exercise for all ages. Physicians usually prescribe exercise especially in some chronic illness. Walking is a type of exercise that one can easily fit in his / her lifestyle and will improve the health no matter what his / her age is.¹ It has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity.² In many researches, it has been shown the benefits of walking and moderate physical activity for at least 30 minute on the most of the days of week or every day can help one to reduce the risk of coronary heart diseases,³⁻⁷ improve blood pressure,^{3,4} and blood sugar,^{8,9} improve blood lipid profile,^{10,11} maintain body weight and lower the risk of obesity,¹² enhance mental wellbeing,^{13,14} reduces the risk of osteoporosis,^{15,16}

reduces the risk of breast and colon cancer,¹⁷ reduces the risk of non insulin dependent [type 2] diabetes¹⁸ and many other benefits. So, walking must to be in correct form to cheer the health fully.

American College of Sports Medicine [ACSM] and American Heart Association [AHA] recommends that every adult accumulate at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity on most, preferably all days of the week with excellent benefit for chronic disease including diabetes.^{16,18} This general exercise recommendation gives a great deal of flexibility in choosing an exercise plan that fits ones lifestyle. Walking is the most popular form of aerobic exercise for adults, and walking at a normal-to-brisk pace

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constitutes moderate-intensity exercise. At a walking pace of 3.5 miles per hour, a person could walk two miles in about 35 minutes. But it should not be done as much as one can get. The exercise prescription must be calculated for individual patient depending on his disease status, physical health, energy intake and expenditure and other factors that would bring benefit rather than usual exhaustion. Walking is the best of all the freehand exercise. There are various organizations world widely who are trying to bring out the people to walk at least 10,000 steps daily through out the day.

Methods and Materials:

This descriptive study was carried out in the department of community medicine of Rajshahi Medical College during the period November 2007 to May 2008 among the morning walkers in Rajshahi Metropolitan city area to assess their knowledge and practice of walking for cheering good health. Four graduate physicians collected data from the walkers in the morning with a pre-tested closed end questionnaire and did physical examination included of blood pressure recording. Purposively 208 samples were included in the study. The collected qualitative and quantitative data were computed and analyzed using SPSS v-14 software and descriptive statistics including non-parametric tests were done to conclude and for recommendation.

Table 1: Some demographic profile of the respondents.

Sl No	Characteristics	Respondents	
		Number	Percent
A.	Age in years		
1	27-36	25	12.02
2	37-46	27	12.99
3	47-56	54	25.96
4	57-66	63	30.29
5	67-76	30	14.42
6	77	09	04.32
B.	Sex	175	84.13
1	Male	33	15.87
2	Female		
C.	Occupation		
1	Retired from service	19	09.13
2	In service	86	41.35
3	Teacher	10	04.81
4	Business	50	24.04
5	Managerial works	27	12.98
6	House wife	16	07.69

D.	Education		
1	Less than 10 years schooling	39	18.75
2	SSC/HSC	70	33.65
3	Bachelor degree	94	46.16
4	Illiterate	02	01.44

Table 2: Morbidity and physical examination findings in the respondents.

Sl No	Characteristics	Respondents	
		Number	Percent
A.	Morbidity status		
1	Free from any chronic disease	95	45.67
2	Only diabetes	74	35.38
3	Hypertension and or other CVDs	17	08.17
4	Respiratory	04	01.92
5	Respiratory + HTN or CVDs	11	05.29
6	Other	07	03.37
B.	BMI		
1	Under weight	06	02.88
2	Normal BMI	93	44.71
3	Overweight	75	36.06
4	Obese	34	16.35
C.	Diastolic Blood pressure		
1	< 90 m m Hg	171	82.21
2	90 m m Hg	37	17.79

Table 3: Practice of Morning walking in the respondents.

Sl No	Characters	Respondents	
		No	Percent
A.	Number of days of walking in a week		
1	3-4	11	05.30
2	5	20	09.61
3	7	20	09.61
4	7	134	64.42
5	Occasionally	23	11.06

B. Daily walking duration in minutes			
1	30	23	11.06
2	60	135	64.90
3	90	38	18.27
4	120	12	05.77
C. Distance covered daily in Kilometer			
1	1	30	14.42
2	2	84	40.38
3	3	42	20.20
4	4	32	15.38
5	5	20	09.62

Daily walking duration in minute	Correct practice		Incorrect practice		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	1	4.36	22	5.65	23	11.06
60	6	4.44	129	5.56	135	64.90
90	0	00	38	00.0	38	18.27
120	0	00	12	00.0	12	05.77
Total	07	3.63	201	6.23	208	100.0

Table 4: Perception of respondents about the ideal practice of walking.

Sl No	Characteristics	Respondents	
		Number	Percent
A. Walking period			
1	Morning	192	92.30
2	Afternoon	02	00.96
3	Evening	10	04.81
4	Other	04	01.92
B. Walking duration			
1	Half an hour	29	13.94
2	Half and a quarter hour	38	18.27
3	An hour	126	60.58
4	One and a half hour	10	04.81
5	Two or more hours	05	02.40
C. Distance to be covered in Kilometer			
1	1	27	12.98
2	2	116	55.77
3	3	49	23.56
4	4	16	07.69

Table 5: Correct walking practice in the respondents [calculated in respect of daily walking duration].

DISCUSSION

A very small section of walkers were correct in their morning practice in respect of time and distance covered. Majority had chronic health problems and had consulted with physicians. Though physicians advised them to walk, yet nature of walking, time and the distance to be covered were not clear to them. So expected benefit from this morning practice probably they did not get. All of them knew the positive benefits of walking on various body systems and organs, yet they did not know and practiced the requisite nature and amount of walking essential for them to live with the said disease safely. Their perception and practice of walking were a far away from the total normality.

The numbers of the morning walkers below age 57 and above that were almost equal. This number indicates that not only the older section but also the people in active jobs and works were conscious in this respect. Among the walkers, 46.16% were bachelor and above degree holder but the proportion of illiterates were poor. This finding indicated that every section of population were not participating probably for socio-economic disparities. In the present study, more than 60% of the walkers walked seven days in the week, spent one hour and traveled 2-3 kilometers daily. But only 3.63% of studied population was found walking briskly. So, the morning walker would not get desired benefit from such walking practice.

Majority of the study people (54.33%) were suffering from chronic health problems and 36.06 % had diabetes. And among the diabetics, 56.75 % had normal BMI indicates good nutritional status of the morning walkers.

Greater section of the walkers who had consulted with the physicians but they did not get clear idea about

method of practice of walking. As physicians' advice is more acceptable to the patients, the physicians can contribute a in the promotion of health in this aspect. But as our sample size was small and the studies were carried in a metropolitan city. So this study did not reflect the true picture of the country. It needs further study and research.

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