

## **SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND EDUCATION IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

### **SPORT, ATTIVITÀ FISICA E FORMAZIONE IN RISPOSTA A COVID-19**

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#### **Abstract**

Health and well-being issues have been the question of important international meetings sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Agency responsible for health protection. On December 31, at the end of 2019, some cases of pneumonia of unknown aetiology were reported to the National Office of the World Health Organization (WHO) in China, in Wuhan, a city in the province of Hubei. This 2019 epidemic (SARS-CoV-2) has spread from Wuhan to China and has been exported to a growing number of countries, causing a growing number of other cases, with different transmission speeds.

Therefore, under the pressure of the new Covid-19 coronavirus epidemic it was difficult to do motor activity. This “disease of the world” COVID-19 “has led to some reflections not only on the inactivity and the poor state of well-being that have not occurred but also on the social and digital transformation of all the peoples of the countries that have been involved. Social and digital transformation in Science and Education Health systems responses to COVID-19 are discussed.

Le questioni relative alla salute e al benessere sono state oggetto di importanti incontri internazionali promossi dall’Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS) e dall’Agenzia responsabile della protezione della salute. Il 31 dicembre, alla fine del 2019, alcuni casi di polmonite ad eziologia sconosciuta sono stati notificati all’Ufficio nazionale dell’Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS) in Cina, a Wuhan, una città nella provincia di Hubei. Questa epidemia del 2019 (SARS-CoV-2) si è estesa da Wuhan in Cina ed è stata esportata in un numero crescente di paesi, causando un numero crescente di altri casi, con diversa velocità di trasmissione.

Pertanto, sotto la pressione dell’epidemia del nuovo coronavirus Covid-19 è stato difficile fare attività fisica. Questa “malattia del mondo” COVID-19 “ ha indotto alcune riflessioni non solo sull’inattività e sullo stato di scarso benessere che né sono conseguiti, ma anche sulla trasformazione sociale e digitale di tutti i popoli dei paesi che sono stati coinvolti.

#### **Keywords**

Sport; Motor activity; COVID-19; Sport activity and well-being  
Sport; Attività motoria; COVID-19; Sport e benessere

## **Introduction**

The current society of technology, information and “well-being”, which has emerged during the last decades of the last century, has significantly highlighted the change in human lifestyle and activities .

Terminologies, such as “well-being”, “quality of life” and “health” have entered fully into the current language by animating the scientific-cultural debate and determining an acceleration of the activities of analysis, research and implementation of initiatives aimed at improving the psychophysical conditions. Therefore, body health was associated with the concept of health, while a privileged socio-economic condition was associated with the concept of well-being.

On December 31, at the end of 2019, some cases of pneumonia of unknown aetiology were reported to the National Office of the World Health Organization (WHO) in China, in Wuhan, a city in the province of Hubei. This 2019 epidemic (SARS-CoV-2) has spread from Wuhan to China and has been exported to a growing number of countries, causing a growing number of other cases, with different transmission speeds.

Moreover, in Italy (by the order of March 20, 2020), but soon also in other countries in different ways, public access to parks, villas, play areas gym and public gardens is prohibited. According to the ordinance, it is not allowed to perform playful activity or outdoor recreation. Later also gyms and swimming pools they had to stop. However according to the same ordinance you allow carry out individually motor activity near your home, at least one meter away from every other person. It follows that a conflict of interest arises for people which leads to a worsening of the state of health. Induced sedentariness, leads to a worsening of overall health. Countries all over the world implemented lockdowns to counteract COVID-19. These lockdowns status limited people’s exercise chances.

### **1. Sport as a socializing factor**

The sports environment is a particular social system, which generates its values, its norms, its ideology. Various environments can be distinguished within the general sports system: from amateur to professional, from mass sports to elite sports, from low level to high level professionalism.

Each environment has its own particular characteristics, although we can say that all these different sports environments present a common fund of values, which refer to the idea of sport.

Socialization is a slow and continuous process, using which the individual assimilates the ways of thinking, the values and the characteristic examples of the society to which he belongs.

Socialization is, therefore, a form of social learning, which allows the individual to enter the society and in particular in some specific areas of it.

The undisputed binomial physical-sport activity equal health improvement contrasts with the risks of social contacts related to the activities. The presence of asymptomatic subjects affected by COVID19 or the onset of the disease with non-specific symptoms has made it necessary to intervene for the reduction of inhuman contacts this has led to the inclusion of collective physical-sports contexts among the social activities considered at risk. The order of March 2020 is aimed at combating the spread of the COVID-19 virus and calls contacts to be contained.

In this contest, the motor activity over time, being accessible also to weaker social classes, is showing all its potential, intended no longer exclusively from the physical point of view but also, and above all from the psychic, educational and social one. It offer a concept of activity motor that begins to act from what a person is able to do, stimulating the consideration one has of oneself and one’s existence, to reach the fulfilment of one’s abilities, highlighting the educational factor, assumed over time, of the activity sporty for everyone, including people with disabilities, showing the plurality of its forms.

Learning a sport means taking possession of movement certificates, but also appropriating

the rules of the game, adjusting one's movements according to those of others (teammates, the opponent or the opponents), following the instructions of the coach. Furthermore, for those who perform in front of an audience it is necessary to learn to deal with this social situation, which can at the same time facilitate or inhibit the quality of the performance.

The socializing experience of the sports group is formative at every age of life; for children it involves learning more codified social rules than those of free play, social rules that focus on the ideas of "taking turns", of exchange, of mutual help, of cooperative and coordinated action, of group logic and individual. For teenagers the socializing experience of sport can mean the feeling of acceptance and integration into the group, very important elements in a period of life marked often by existential doubts and behavioural uncertainties.

## **2. The importance of sporting activity in any condition**

The prevention activity, under the point of view of the Health Education, has reached a considerable importance in the last decades via informative/advising campaigns and screening activities.

Sports helps an individual much more than in the physical aspects alone. A number of studies have shown that exercise may play a therapeutic role in addressing a number of psychological disorders.

Despite the information that the benefits of regular physical activity are widely known, the choice of a sedentary lifestyle is increasing in frequency. There is also evidence that exercise reduces the risk of other chronic diseases, including obesity, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, depression, and cancer of the breast and colon.

Lockdowns seriously limited people's exercise possibilities. All together, experts advocated remaining physically active to prevent future health problems.

Therefore, not all sports can be practiced at home, but there are many opportunities to play physical activity individually, even at home, with or without a minimum of equipment.

The workout to do while staying at home can be to develop balance skills, do stretching exercises (stretching) or stimulating muscle strength with isometric and exotonic exercises. The qualities of resistance you can also train in a small space by jumping the rope, while for elderly or untrained people, gentle gymnastics and yoga can help dance practice may also be appropriate and dance, thus stigmatizing even a recreational faculty. An appropriate stretching exercising program prevents this kind of phenomenon and therefore is able to alleviate and cure the effects, helping along the limitations.

Benefits will be visible in a short time with an improvement of the condition of the (major systems) and a better feedback. In the sports, the stretching exercise, has reached the more and more importance, thanks to this particular method of stretching-training that the athlete will have the chance to reach the max muscle flexibility, keeping the organism in the best conditions.

It is central, in a condition in not activity at home, to educate, especially, the adolescent, to pursue appropriate lifestyles with the correct use of bodily functions and food hygiene through the exercise of sports activity. As showed, some benefit can be obtained with a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity most days of the week

## **3. The effects on school closure**

In response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, 107 countries had implemented national school closures by March 18, 2020. Perhaps the most important reason that led governments to close schools was evidence that the early introduction of this restrictive measure was effective in reducing the incidence rates of influenza and related clinical, social and economic problems during seasonal and pandemic flu epidemics. Study of mathematical

models seem to indicate that school closure can be significantly effective for infection control only when epidemics are due to viruses with low transmissibility and the infection rates are higher in children than in adults. This applies to influenza viruses and influenza infections, but does not seem valid for coronaviruses, including SARS-CoV-2, which have different transmission dynamics, or for COVID-19, which mainly affects adults and the elderly.

Although the official data, to our knowledge, on the effectiveness of school closures during the COVID-19 epidemic are not yet verifiable, the limited relevance of this restrictive measure adapted by the various countries seems to be confirmed by clear evidence. In a recent systematic review, Viner et al (“School closure and management practices during coronavirus outbreaks including COVID-19: a rapid systematic review”) showed that the relative contribution of school closure to controlling SARS-CoV transmission 2 was not relevant. Data from the SARS epidemic in mainland China, Hong Kong and Singapore suggest that school closures did not contribute to controlling the epidemic.

Recent studies of the UK’s COVID-19, based on data from the Wuhan province, predicted that mere school shutdown would only prevent 2-4% of deaths, far less than other socially spaced interventions.

## Conclusion

Exercise, sport and physical activity can make a fundamental contribution to the well-being of people in developing countries. They have long been used in the treatment and rehabilitation of communicable and non-communicable diseases. Physical activity for individuals is a strong means for the prevention of diseases and for nations is a cost-effective method to improve public health across populations. Therefore sport activity, has a fundamental role in the lives of all people, becoming an opportunity for growth regardless of personal and social conditions.

Physical activities are not aimed only at improving physical performance, but at training an individual more available and adaptable to different circumstances: if they are practiced with seriousness and constancy, they allow the child to have a global vision of life’s problems with greater ability to tolerate and understand one’s own kind.

In addition, sports activities create a strong sense of security and free from tension and aggression. Sport repeats in a small way what everyday life is: you win, lose, exult, suffer, struggle, resist, struggle and recover. Sports activity, defined by the level in which it is practiced, is very important in the personal growth of both the child and the adult.

Despite these clear and drastic changes for COVID-19 is representing an important challenge for public health. The panic aroused by the global health alarm remains. It has created serious consequences for more political and economic social factors as well as obviously social health because the COVID-19 has changed the habits of billions of people. Furthermore, as it is unlikely that we will return to the “normality” in the near future, it is central to scientifically educate the people about the impact of a lockdown on exercise levels and form.

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