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The Effects of Exercise Intervention on Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Abstract

Individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), face many challenges throughout their lives. They face obstacles daily with cognitive functions, social skills, motor skills, mental health, sleep, stereotypical/repetitive behaviors and overall quality of life, to name a few. The use of exercise as an intervention program has been shown to improve and even eradicate many of these everyday issues. The research we did, shows numerous studies that were done to prove this phenomenon. These studies varied on many levels. Different subjects were used for each study. We examined an array of age groups and experimental group sizes. In some cases, the effects of exercise on patients with ASD were compared to other interventions such as, the use of a weighted blanket, whereas exercise proved to be more successful. In other cases, some studies were focused strictly on practical applications of aerobic exercise. Since most the studies we looked at examined children with ASD, their families, teachers and caregivers were asked to look for changes in behaviors or attitudes. In many cases, visible changes were noted by these parties. All the studies had one thing in common, the subjects all saw relief in one way or another, from many daily symptoms and behaviors and showed improvement in cognitive function and overall quality of life. In some of our studies, it showed that when discontinuing the exercise regiment, symptoms deteriorated again. People with autism spectrum disorder and their families are constantly looking for techniques that are accessible and effective. The results of this study were clear and unanimous. Based off this study, exercise seems be just the thing millions of individuals around the world with ASD can benefit from.

Keywords:

1. Autism
2. Exercise
3. Aerobic exercise

4. Intervention
5. Motor skills
6. Social skills
7. Sleep
8. Behaviors