

## COVID-19 and Impairment Due to Inactivity

Yetkin Utku Kamuk 

Department of Coaching Education, Hitit University Faculty of Sports Sciences, Çorum, Turkey

ORCID iD of the author: Y. U. K. 0000-0001-5976-7503.

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COVID-19 has been rapidly spreading worldwide since it was first reported to the WHO by China on 31 December 2019. As of April 3, there are almost one million confirmed cases and about 50 thousand deaths all over the world (1). Governments try to use different policies such as herd immunity, mitigation, suppression or even curfew but any policy has major challenges. They are mainly focused on how to control the pandemic while the scientists are racing to find the best medication and vaccine. The highly recommended strategy is "social distancing" (2). Although it is both protective and preventive for those with chronic diseases and the elderly, it may impair the physical and mental health of the noninfected people as the isolation period extends. Another aspect of the global pandemic is the limitations in mobility, especially results in staying home. It promotes inactivity for the noninfected people by limiting their chance to exercise due to the measures taken. Along with this, people may tend to consume more than their daily requirements because of stress and boredom. Caloric intake may increase due to binge eating, comfort eating, junk food, and/or high-calorie drinks including alcohol. It is currently unpredicted when this pandemic will end but it is simply answered as "not very soon". Optimistic expectations that the outbreak will end and life will get back to normal in the next 12 weeks but the vaccine is 12 to 18 months away. So, staying home for at least 12 weeks will abnormally increase the caloric intake and physical inactivity will also contribute to the gain fat. A hamburger, fries and a milkshake or a can of soda can reach a total of 1500 calories, without bars, nuts, snacks, and extra drinks. Consuming some other traditional meals, containing animal fat, oil, and sugar, may provide higher than this amount of calories. If a person gets extra 1500 calories per day, at the end of the 12-week period, the increase in weight will be almost 14 kgs and this will adversely affect health. To promote physical activity and to inform people about the effects of extra calorie intake will be an appropriate approach to prevent this "delicious and easy" threat. Social media should be used as a means of communication by the governments to warn people about the risk of excess calorie intake and physical inactivity, or the obesity epidemic may worsen in the near future.

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