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Psoriatic arthritis and physical activity: a systematic review

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Abstract

Introduction

The positive effects of physical activity in both rheumatoid arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis have been proven, but no clear data is yet published regarding psoriatic arthritis (PsA). The aims of this study were (i) to assess the level of physical activity (PA) in these patients and (ii) to review the effects of PA on articular disease, extra articular symptoms, and overall well-being.

Methods

The research strategy was performed on Pubmed, Cochrane, PEDro databases using the following keywords: “psoriatic arthritis AND physical activity” without restriction. The PRISMA methodology was used to select and analyze articles. We searched for all studies published online and in English before January 2021.

Results

A total of 319 studies were retrieved by our search but only 13 could be included. Two reports showed that 17 and 68% of patients reported practicing regularly physical activity. Exercise improved the BASDAI (Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Index), the general symptoms (pain and fatigue), and the quality of life. Muscle strength and some of cardiovascular comorbidities were also improved. While the studies concerning the risk of enthesitis or flare induced by physical activity are conflicting, recent clinical trials did not mention any adverse event. Finally, rehabilitation programs were associated with a reduction mainly of pain and fatigue.

Conclusion

Studies show clear beneficial effects of exercise in PsA on disease activity, on well-being, and on comorbidities, and they seem to outweigh the risk of enthesitis induced by mechanical stress. Further investigations are necessary to confirm these results and to precise the modalities of exercise.

Key Points

- *Psoriatic arthritis patients have a sedentary lifestyle*
- *Physical activity has beneficial effects on disease activity, well-being and reduced some cardiovascular risk factor in psoriatic arthritis*
- *Risk of enthesitis and flares is low with exercise in psoriatic arthritis*



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