

25- 26, 2020, with 2,069 adult Brazilian from all states of the country, (all had a mobile phone), with a margin of error of 2%, showed that the percentage of people supporting social distancing decreased from 76% in the beginning of April to 65%.

The authors of the viewpoint commented that when both France and the United Kingdom declared more severe restrictive measures admitted the possibility of the practice of physical activity in open spaces. However, the French capital, after evaluating the non-deceleration of the disease, banned the practice of activities in open areas between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. In addition, the epidemiological situation in Brazil today is much worse than when these countries enacted such measures, with a total of 498,440 cases, 33,274 new daily cases and more than 1,000 deaths per day, registered on more than three consecutive days.⁴ Then, it is needed to consider cultural and epidemiologic differences of these countries in comparison with Brazil, a country of continental dimensions with huge social inequalities, and where part of the population lives in extreme poverty.

It is worth pointing out that, out of the three articles mentioned by the authors, highlighting the importance of being physically active during the COVID-19 pandemic, two articles are points of view and one is a comment, and one of them were published by the same authors of the referred text. The two opinions indicate the importance of the practice of physical activities at home or in open areas,

but they also reinforce the need to observe and respect the recommendations of the local sanitary authorities about the use of public spaces.

There is no scientific evidence supporting that the deaths caused by the interruption or lowering of a regular practice of physical activities, even for a short time, could be more harmful than the risk of a massive contamination by SARS-CoV-2. Other issues must be investigated, such as: does the practice of physical activities on a daily basis do promote immunological benefit against COVID-19? How much time of physical exercise would be necessary? How long would it take to a person lose this supposed benefit?

It is a challenge for governments to determine when the benefits of reduction in cardiovascular risk and improvement in mental health and immune system, promoted by physical activity, overcome the need for strict measures to contain the pandemic.

In our opinion, it is the role of the governments to hold educational campaigns that stimulate and guide the practice of physical activities at home, through a variety of medias, while the restrictive measures are in force. But, to officially decree that physical activities are “essential” activities, seems to be a risky and reckless alternative considering the epidemiological and political contexts in Brazil today. The incentive to the circulation of people in the present sanitary conjuncture can cost lives and lead to the need of a more prolonged time of restrictive measures, or even a lockdown.

References

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