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## The Pandemic of Physical Inactivity: Do Physicians Prescribe Physical Activity to Their Patients?

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Physical inactivity is a growing pandemic over the last two decades. It is well evidenced that physical activity can reduce all-cause mortality by at least 30%. Moreover, literature shows the independent magnificent role of physical activity in reducing the prevalence of cardiovascular diseases, colon cancer, breast cancer, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, and even falls among elderly people. Moreover, physical activity has a fundamental effect in improving mental health -one of the modern life public health problems- and brain functionality in terms of decreasing rates of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

With this evidence-based published and known information, the question is: how many physicians are prescribing physical activity to their patients as part of the management plan? Physical activity is a free medication that can make wonderful improvements in the health status of patients. Walking particularly brisk walking for at least 10 minutes a day can improve the health status of patients significantly and can also help not only in decreasing the dose of the prescribed medication but also in increasing medication effectiveness. This is well established in hypertension and diabetes prescribed medications.

The increasing burden on health systems worldwide is primarily based on the racing increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Thousands or even millions of dollars can be saved when physicians consider prescribing physical activity -as part of changing a sedentary lifestyle to an active one- to their patients and promote it for the healthy people to prevent developing NCDs. What are the reasons behind not prescribing appropriate physical activity to patients? Should new policies have to be placed to make physical activity a

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principal line in managing patients according to their conditions and abilities? What is the threshold of NCDs that should be reached to seriously start to consider adopting preventing measures and changing lifestyle approach along with the medical approach?

If the wisdom of Benjamin Franklin “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is followed, billions of dollars could be saved from decreased illness burden. Promoting physical activity and avoiding a sedentary lifestyle is worthy enough to reverse the arrow of the global prevalence of NCDs.

The world is looking for substantial changes in the health policies and practices that would turn the tide!