

Subject: [PPM] pps-Pain, physical activity, and disability

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From: Angus <angus1@CRIS.COM>

Organization: Down On DaFarm

To: POST-POLIO-MED@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU

Please send replies to sender or to the list:
POST-POLIO-MED@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU

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Pain, physical activity, and disability in individuals
with late effects of polio.

Willen C, Grimby G
Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Goteborg University, Sweden.

[Medline record in process]

OBJECTIVE: The aim of this study was to provide a description of pain and its relationship to the effects of polio, physical activity, and disability.

DESIGN: Assessment instruments used were: a pain questionnaire, a pain drawing, a visual analogue scale (VAS), a 30-m walk indoors, isokinetic muscle strength, serum creatine kinase concentration, the Physical Activity Scale for the Elderly, and the Nottingham Health Profile (NHP).

SETTING: A university hospital department.

SUBJECTS: Thirty-two consecutive individuals with late effects of polio.

RESULTS: More than 50% of the individuals had pain every day, mostly during physical activity. The mean VAS score for daily pain intensity was 55mm, range 0 to 93mm. In the lower limbs cramping pain was the most common pain characteristic in both polio-affected and non-polio-affected limbs. In the upper limbs and in the trunk, aching pain was the most common pain characteristic, especially in the polio-affected areas. The degree of muscle weakness had no correlation to pain experience. The walking test demonstrated a relatively small difference between spontaneous and maximal walking speed.

The NHP questionnaire demonstrated that all six dimensions (energy, pain, physical mobility, sleep, emotional reactions, and social isolation) were affected. The dimensions pain and physical mobility both strongly correlated with energy. **CONCLUSIONS:** There is a relationship between physical activity in daily life and experience of pain. In many postpolio individuals who experience a high level of pain, spontaneous and maximal walking speed are approximately the same. It is strongly recommended that individuals with late effects of polio, experiencing aching and especially cramping pain, modify their level of physical activity.

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