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PHYSICAL FITNESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE DURING THE SARS-COV-2 CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

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Physical fitness is an indicator of health condition that informs about the health status, physical development and individual motor characteristics (e.g. speed, dexterity, strength) of the examined people. Physical fitness can be assessed using the International Physical Fitness Test (MTSF) and the European Fitness Test (EUROFIT). In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced a global pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, which causes the COVID-19 disease. Most governments around the world, including Poland, have recommendations on isolation and social distancing. People spent their time mainly at home and their physical activity was significantly reduced, which could affect their physical fitness.

The aim of the study was to assess the impact of isolation during the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus epidemic on the physical fitness of people aged 20-25 residing in Poland.

The study group consisted of 78 people: 52 women (20±2 years, body height: 168±5 cm, body mass: 60.4±7.7 kg) and 26 men (20±4 years, body height: 179±9 cm, body mass: 75.6±13.7 kg).

Physical fitness tests in accordance with the International Physical Fitness Test were carried out twice, with a monthly interval: 1) when there were restrictions on isolation (May 15, 2020); 2) when most of the restrictions were lifted and for about a month in small groups it was possible to use outdoor sports facilities and do physical activity in forests and parks (17/06/2020).

Fitness tests included the following tests: speed, power (leg strength), strength, arm and shoulder strength, agility, abdominal muscle strength, and flexibility. Due to limitations during a pandemic and the possible lack of access to the necessary equipment, the strength test and the arm and shoulder strength test was optional. The participants filled in the prepared questionnaire, which allowed to collect measurement data. Then, a statistical analysis of the results was performed, checking if the results differed significantly between studies. Moreover, the obtained values were compared with the literature data. There were slight changes in the results between the measurements, based on the average values obtained, it can be concluded that physical fitness has worsened. However, the statistically performed tests didn't show any significant differences between the results of the fitness tests obtained in subsequent studies.