

SUMMARY

Physical activity (PA) plays a very important role in prevention and treatment of "diseases of civilization". Due to knowledge of the special role of PA in human biology gained during their studies, medical university graduates should be models of health promotion. However, students of physiotherapy and other medical faculties often show a surprising lack of concern for their own health and seem to accept a non-physically active lifestyle.

It was therefore considered worthwhile to explore the motives and obstacles affecting PA of physiotherapy, LFA and midwifery students of the Medical University of Bialystok to assess their total and typical PA domains, determine PA in each year of study and the number of hours spent sitting during classes and in free time. The study used the International Physical Activity Questionnaire long version (IPAQ long) and the author's questionnaire. They were completed by 433 students of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the Medical University of Bialystok: 251 physiotherapy students, 105 female midwifery students (1st-5th year) and 77 female speech therapy with phonoaudiology students (2nd-5th year).

The students' parents most often had vocational and secondary education. Most of the respondents had less than 500 PLN for personal expenses. Almost all male and female students felt healthy and considered themselves moderately physically active. In their families there were non communicable diseases related to PA. During our study, the percentage of female students who were active in sports and recreational sport activity (RSA) decreased significantly. The highest level of RSA was among students who had lived in small and medium-sized cities before the study. Among respondents who considered themselves physically active, sport participation in the family and their own sport and SRA before college had a significant influence on their PA. The subjects' motivation for being physically active varied significantly. Physiotherapy students wanted to be physically active to be physically fit; female physiotherapy students - to stay healthy; female LFA students – to lose/maintain weight loss; female midwifery students - to relieve/manage stress. All respondents reported reduced PA during their studies due to lack of free time resulting from excessive daily duties and an inconvenient university timetable. The midwifery and speech therapy with phonoaudiology students were the least inclined to exercise. The male and female physiotherapy students appreciated the importance of PA the most. Nearly all respondents believed that PA played an important role in the prevention and treatment of lifestyle diseases. Physiotherapy students were the most physically active, female midwifery students - the least. During their university activities and SRA, physiotherapy students spent the most energy; midwifery students spent the least. LFA female students expended the most energy during active movement and work in/around the house. The most sedentary were the 5th year midwifery students who sat 9.2+1.6 hrs/day on weekdays, and 7.2+1.7 hrs/day on weekends. It is crucial to convince the surveyed students that the lack of adequate PA predisposes to chronic diseases of civilization in accordance with the words of Plato

from more than two thousand years ago: "Lack of physical activity destroys the physical condition of every human being, while movement and systematic exercise saves and protects it".