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Changes in Women's Physical Activity During the Transition to College

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Background: Few studies have examined physical activity during the transition from high school to college. Purpose: To examine changes in physical activity and physical activity patterns among females during the transition from high school to college. Methods:

Sixty-nine females (age 18.2 ± 0.4 years; body mass index 21.8 ± 2.6 kg/m²; 84% Caucasian) at a large university in the south central United States participated in this prospective longitudinal study. They completed a questionnaire at the beginning of their freshman and sophomore years of college, recalling their participation in physical activity during the previous 12 months. Results: Weekly time spent in moderate, vigorous, and moderate-to-vigorous physical activity declined between high school and college ($p < 0.01$). Physical activity participation also differed by semester ($p < 0.01$), with a significant decline during the summer between high school and college ($p < 0.01$), and an additional decrease during the first semester of college ($p < 0.01$). Discussion:

Participants' physical activity significantly decreased from high school to college, with the largest decline occurring during the summer between high school and college.

Translation to Health Education Practice: The transition from high school to college is a critical time to promote physical activity among women.

Effects of Aerobic Exercise and Resistance Training on Stage I and II Breast Cancer Survivors: A Pilot Study

Dena Garner and Elizabeth G. Erck

Background: Lack of physical activity has been noted in breast cancer survivors and been attributed to decreased physical function. Purpose: This study assessed the effects of a moderate-to-vigorous physical exercise program on body fat percentage, maximal oxygen consumption (VO₂ max), body mass index, and bone mineral density (BMD) of breast cancer survivors. Methods: Eleven stage I and II breast cancer patients, 40–65 years old, were recruited to assess VO₂ max, BMD, weight, and percentage of body fat before and after an 8-week exercise (aerobic and resistance training) intervention. Results:

Supervised exercise significantly improved aerobic capacity ($+4.227$ ml/kg/min; $P = 0.004$) and increased, though not significantly, bone mass densities of hip ($+0.433$ SD units; $P = 0.061$) and spine ($+0.224$ SD units; $P = 0.350$). No significant changes were observed for body mass index ($+0.0196$ kg/m²; $P = 0.927$) or body fat percentage (-0.737% ; $P = 0.639$). Discussion: Understanding how breast cancer survivors tolerate and respond to a moderate-to-vigorous exercise program is an important step in developing programs for this population following recovery.

Translation to Health Education Practice: Moderate-to-vigorous physical exercise may be an effective and well-tolerated intervention for improving physical function in breast cancer survivors.

College Women and Breast Cancer: Knowledge, Behavior, and Beliefs Regarding Risk Reduction

Lydia Burak and Barbara Boone

Background: Although breast cancer prevention should begin in youth, many young women are not aware of the modifiable lifestyle risk factors for the disease. Purpose: The purposes of this study were to examine the breast cancer-related knowledge, behaviors, and beliefs of young women; to determine whether knowledge about lifestyle risks was related to risk-reducing behaviors; and to determine whether value expectancy constructs could predict risk-reducing behaviors. Method: Surveys assessing knowledge, behaviors, beliefs, and demographics were administered to 522 college women. Results: The majority of the participants lacked knowledge about the lifestyle risk factors for breast cancer, and knowledge and beliefs were unrelated to their behaviors. Discussion: The results of the study have implications for health educators, health care providers, and researchers who provide young women with the information and skills to engage in behaviors that may protect them against breast cancer. Translation to Health Education Practice: Young women need to understand that engaging in certain behaviors can lower their risk of breast cancer. Health educators need to incorporate breast cancer risk reduction into their educational efforts with young women.

College Students' Judgment of Others Based on Described Eating Pattern

Rebecca Pearson and Michael Young

Background: The literature available on attitudes toward eating patterns and people choosing various foods suggests the possible importance of “moral” judgments and desirable personality characteristics associated with the described eating patterns. Purpose: This study was designed to replicate and extend a 1993 study of college students' judgments of others based on described dietary fat patterns. Methods: Participants rated male or female peer models described as having low-fat, high-fat, or “good fat” eating habits. Data were analyzed using factorial MANOVA to determine effects of model gender and described eating pattern on two scales: likeability and personal success orientation. Results: The results of this analysis revealed no significant overall effect of model gender. However, there was a significant overall effect of described eating pattern ($F(6, 574)=38.48, p<.01$). There were no significant model gender by described eating pattern interactions. Low-fat and good-fat male and female models were rated statistically higher on the success orientation scale, but these males were statistically less likeable than high-fat males. Discussion: Perceptions of others, and self-perceptions based on beliefs about others' attitudes and opinions, are strong influences in the college-age population. Thus, these attitudes may prove to be high barriers to adoption of healthier eating patterns. Translation to Health Education Practice: Understanding such judgments may help health education professionals tailor interventions designed to improve young adults' eating patterns.

A Comparison of the Sexual Risk Behaviors of Asian American and Pacific Islander College Students and Their Peers

Rebecca Arliss

Background: Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) have been neglected in health research. Purpose: The purpose of this study is to (1) describe the sexual risk behaviors of a sample of AAPI community college students using questions from the National College Health Risk Behavior Survey, and (2) to compare the sexual risk behaviors of AAPI study participants ($n=138$) to their non-Asian peers ($n=328$).

Methods: Comparisons were made between AAPI and non-Asian study participants using a z-test. Results: AAPI study participants were significantly more likely than their non-Asian peers to practice abstinence, limit their number of sexual partners, and use condoms. An unexpected finding was that AAPI participants were more likely to report a history of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Discussion: Research suggests that mother-daughter sexual communication during adolescence is a crucial prerequisite to the practice of safer sex behaviors. A lack of sexual communication with parents during childhood may contribute to higher rates of STDs later in life. Translation to Health Education Practice: Health educators who work with parents, adolescents, and young adults should include effective sexual communication skills in health promotion programs designed to prevent STDs and unintended pregnancy.

A Tailored Approach to Identifying and Addressing College Students' Online Health Information Literacy

Jennifer Banas

Background: College students may fail to practice information literacy skills because they are unaware of their skill level or are not concerned with the risks. Purpose: In order to develop an effective message that motivates college students to learn online health information literacy skills, a better understanding of perceptions about such skills and use of the internet to locate health information is needed. Methods: A risk assessment and internet use survey were administered to participants (n=98). The risk assessment evaluated and grouped individuals into one of three risk-response states based on perceived threat severity and susceptibility, as well as perceived self- and response-efficacy. Discussion: Risk-response states and frequency of internet use to locate health information varied significantly ($p<.001$). A significant relationship was also found between frequency of use and risk-response state ($p<.01$). Topics most researched included an illness or condition; nutrition, exercise, or weight-control issues; and mental health issues. Translation to Health Education Practice: When seeking to motivate college students to learn online health information literacy skills, educators should tailor their messages based on risk-response states, frequency of internet use to locate health information, and topics researched.

The Science Ambassador Program: Partnering Scientists with Science Teachers

Heather C. Hamner, Alina L. Flores, Christine E. Prue, and Patricia Mersereau

This article focuses on the development and implementation of the Science Ambassador (SA) Program, which targets adolescents by working directly with science teachers who write and implement lesson plans that feature public health topics. The main goals of the program are to develop science lesson plans on public health topics, expose adolescents to health information at an earlier, formative age, and inspire adolescents to explore future careers in public health. The information presented in this article is intended to give other program planners insight into the structure and implementation of the program and to share valuable lessons learned.

An Application of the Learning Cycle in Health Education: HIV/AIDS Prevention

Tania Barman Basta and Charles R. Barman

Objectives: At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to (1) identify methods of contraception that are the least/most effective for HIV/AIDS prevention, (2) describe modes of HIV/AIDS transmission, (3) demonstrate proper condom use, and (4) describe the consequences of unprotected sexual behavior. Target Audience: Students enrolled in high school or college-level courses related to health.

Improving Health Information Literacy: An Environmental Health Application
Ying Li and Lorrie Brilla

Objectives: After this lesson, students should be able to (1) identify possible problems associated with online information; (2) define health information literacy; and (3) list at least three criteria to evaluate the quality of websites related to health information literacy. Target Audience: High school and lower-division college students.