

Health Qi Gong

An important intervention in primary prevention in the German health care system

Mons University 10.07.2014

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Health Qi Gong

In Germany the responsibility for primary prevention lies with the statutory health insurances.

The National Association of Statutory Health Insurance regularly publishes a guideline regarding primary prevention.

There are two important fields of action in which Health Qi Gong can play an important.

Stress Management

Psychosocial stress is an important factor that causes, triggers and/or aggravates many diseases. It is relevant for:

- Cardiovascular,
- Musculoskeletal,
- Immunological,
- Psychosomatic and mental illnesses.

Especially chronic psychobiological stress reactions in correlation with an unbalanced demand-rest-ratio can damage physical and mental health.

Stress Management

Prevention concepts

- Promotion of stress management skills
- Promotion of relaxation skills

Promotion of stress management skills

Effectiveness

Meta-analyses of relevant evaluation studies could prove a long-term effectiveness regarding the reduction of physical discomfort and negative mental states (anxiety, depression) as well as a decrease in anger and hostility.

Promotion of stress management skills

Often used interventions:

- Teaching of self-management skills (problem solving, time management)
- Teaching of cognitive restructuring methods (change of attitudes, positive self-instruction)
- Teaching of psychophysiological relaxation techniques
- Training of assertiveness behaviour

Aspects of the three adjustments of Health Qi Gong – body, breath and mind – and their combination into oneness can be found in this approach.

Promotion of relaxation

Effectiveness

- There are several relaxation methods which are effective. This has been proven empirically. Learning a relaxation method improves the ability for self-regulation of psychophysiological stress reactions. All methods trigger the so-called **relaxation response**.

Methods for the promotion of relaxation:

- Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR)
- Autogenic Training (AT)
- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- Qi Gong

Health Qi Gong as a health sport

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The necessity of changing movement habits

Prevention concepts

- Approaching the lack of exercise through health sport activities
- Prevention and reduction of specific health risk with appropriate exercise programs

Approaching the lack of exercise through health sport activities

The lack of exercise (for some people the general lack of movement) is a key risk for health.

If the minimal demand through physical activities is set at 800-1000 kcal a week in addition to the normal everyday activities, it is only met by 10-20 % of the adult population in industrialised countries. The results of that are catastrophic for the quality of life, health of the population and the economy. Physical inactivity is going to be the key problem regarding health in the third millennium.

Approaching the lack of exercise through health sport activities

Aim of the actions

- Strengthening of physical health resources (stamina, strength, flexibility, coordination, ability to relax)
- Strengthening of psychosocial health resources (knowledge about action and effect, self-efficacy, mood, embodiment)
- Reduction of risk factors (especially for the cardiovascular system and the musculoskeletal system)
- Coping with psychosomatic disorders
- Establishing long-term health sport activities

Prevention and reduction of specific health risk with appropriate exercise programs

Interventions out of the field of primary prevention are used for:

- Problems in the musculoskeletal system (back pain, arthritis, osteoporosis, incontinence and disorders of motor activity)
- Problems with the metabolism (obesity, diabetes, blood pressure, etc.)
- Problems with the cardiovascular system and the respiratory system
- Problems with mental and psychosomatic disorders (depression, muscle tension, etc.)

What is health sports?

Not every physical exercise has significant positive health promoting effects. Activities in competitive sports, Funsport, body building, leisure sports can have positive effects on the wellbeing but they are not health sports.

Important criteria for health sport are the adjustment to individual abilities and the appropriate amount and intensity of exercise. Others are a persisting behavioural change and the use of the sport as a daily self-management strategy.

Health Qi Gong fulfils all above mentioned criteria, especially the quality of the exercises and the individual adjustability.

A report about the importance of Health Qi Gong as a health sport is in work at the University of Neubrandenburg.

The University of Neubrandenburg

The University Neubrandenburg is offering full time bachelor and master studies in health sciences since 2000.

To meet the increasing demand for qualified employees in the area of health promotion and prevention the university will also offer part-time studies that are aimed towards and achievable by people with a current employment.

It is the three-year master degree study in health sciences “Mind, Body, Health – Health Promotion and Prevention East and West”.

This study enables people to get an academic degree as a health scientist and provides them with the knowledge of how to work in cooperation with the health insurances.

The University of Neubrandenburg

But those who already have the base education do not have to write another master thesis, they can take the following certified courses of further education, which are also acknowledged by the statutory health insurances.

- Health Qi Gong (approx. 400 hours of study)
- Multimodal Stress Management
- Progressive Muscle-Relaxation
- Autogenic Training

With this development Health Qi Gong is not anymore used only as a relaxation technique in stress management, but now fills a new key position as a health sport.

**Thank you
for your attention!**