

【Original Article】

Relationships between Sports-related Activities and Self-rated Health: Sports Participation, Watching Sports, and Volunteering to Support Sports

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Abstract

Purpose: Many studies have reported the effects of sports participation on health status. However, the effects of watching sports and volunteering to support sports, on health status have not been well researched. Thus, the aim of the present study was to investigate the effects of sports participation, watching sports, and volunteering to support sports on health status.

Methods: We analyzed data from the National Sport-Life Survey 2006 conducted by the Sasakawa Sports Foundation. This survey contained items pertaining to sports participation, watching sports and volunteering to support sports. The following items were also surveyed: self-rated health (SRH), sex, age, body mass index (BMI), job, family status, and walking time. SRH is the one of the most commonly used measures of health status. Multiple logistic regression analysis was performed to determine the odds ratios (ORs) and 95% confidence intervals (CI), with SRH as the dependent variable (good SRH = 1, bad SRH = 0), and sports-related activities as independent variables. The associations were adjusted for age, BMI, job, family status, and walking time.

Results: Sports participation was significantly associated with good SRH among both men and women (men: ORs = 2.44, 95%CI = 1.75-3.40; women: ORs = 1.88, 95%CI = 1.37-2.59). Watching sports was significantly associated with good SRH among men (ORs = 2.53, 95%CI = 1.78-3.59), but the association was not as strong as it was for women (ORs = 1.34, 95%CI = 0.92-1.97). Volunteering to support sports was significantly associated with good SRH among men, but not among women (men: ORs = 2.03, 95%CI = 1.09-3.75; women: ORs = 1.28, 95%CI = 0.60-2.72).

Conclusion: These results suggest that watching sports and volunteering to support sports promote good health, especially in men. However, we could not establish a causal relationship because our study was a cross-sectional study. Very few studies have focused on watching and volunteering. More studies are needed to explore the relationships between sports-related activities and health status.

Key words: sports, health, cross-sectional studies, adult, Japan

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