

**【Review Article】**

## Trends in Physical Activity Research in the Field of Physical Therapy

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### Abstract

**Objective:** The purpose of this article is to describe the present conditions surrounding physical therapists and the specialized field of physical therapy and consider trends in physical activity research.

**Methods:** Public data from the Japanese Physical Therapy Association (JPTA) were used to assess the present conditions for physical therapists and the specialized field of physical therapy, and the following key words, “diabetes,” “physical activity” and/or “exercise,” were used to search the JPTA congress database for publications within the past five years, in order to identify trends in physical activity research.

**Results:** A total of 110,675 individuals had passed the physical therapist national examination as of June 2013. In June 2013, the JPTA established the Japanese Physical Therapy Society and 12 departmental sub-societies. In addition, protocols for certifying physical therapy specialists and regimens have been recently institutionalized, and the number of physical therapists with these qualifications is expected to increase in the future.

The search of the JPTA congress database showed eight and 27 general presentations for the key words “diabetes mellitus and physical activity” and “diabetes mellitus and exercise,” respectively. There were many articles based on clinical practice; however, the research designs of these studies may be inadequate for epidemiological studies.

**Conclusions:** Close cooperation within the scientific field of exercise epidemiology is necessary in order to produce future studies using more appropriate design.

**Key words:** physical therapy, physical activity, exercise, therapeutic exercise, diabetes mellitus

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