

Health Implications of Pickleball

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Abstract: *Pickleball is a sport that is considered a combination of table tennis, badminton and tennis. Pickleball is played with a racket similar to a table tennis racket but larger than a table tennis racket, the Pickleball ball, similar in size to a tennis ball, is made of hollow plastic and has holes. When playing this sport, players will play on a court that is similar in size to a badminton court, but the net will be placed close to the ground like tennis, while the court lines are divided into squares like badminton. Pickleball was born in the United States in 1965, Pickleball is known as one of the fastest growing sports in the world. In the past 5 years, this sport has begun to appear in Vietnam and has quickly attracted many people to participate in practice. Pickleball attracts individuals of all ages, not just young people. Playing pickleball regularly can help improve flexibility, endurance, increase muscle strength, stabilize cardiovascular health and control weight. In addition, this sport is quickly becoming a trend thanks to the connection with others with similar interests, promoting community participation, reducing stress and improving mental health.*

Keywords: Pickleball, physical education, sports, health, practice

1. Introduction

In the process of studying, working, and living in daily life, health problems such as vision loss, cardiovascular problems, spinal pain, gastritis, etc. can occur to everyone and exercising is a factor that helps people avoid some of the above diseases, because it has a positive impact on people's health and prevents the progression of other diseases. It has been discovered that a trend of decreasing human fitness levels in the modern technological era is the sedentary lifestyle that is popular today globally, moreover, the minimum physical activity is quite irregular. A person living in a technological society does not need to make too much effort to meet his daily needs. Daily work often includes many intellectual activities and working a lot on computers, leaving almost no time for outdoor games or sports hobbies. This has an extremely negative impact on health and causes the appearance of chronic diseases.

It has long been proven that lack of physical activity has a negative impact not only on the general physical condition but also on people's intellectual potential. With a sedentary lifestyle, metabolic disorders are inevitable, which directly affects the acquisition of knowledge.

Everyone needs to be physically active, regular exercise and training have a very beneficial effect on all structures of the body, reducing the likelihood of health problems and accelerating the drive to eliminate existing diseases.

Choosing a sport to practice to improve health and avoid disease is a very important issue for each individual, choosing a sport to practice each individual must calculate and choose a sport that is appropriate to their ability and health. Choose a sport that suits your budget, space and time. Choose a sport that creates motivation and excitement during the training process. etc.

There are many sports to choose from for each person and currently there is a sport that many people choose to practice regularly to improve their physical and mental health, which is a new emerging sport in Vietnam, Pickleball.

It is a sport developed in the United States in 1965 and introduced to Vietnam in 2020 until now, but the growth rate of this sport is too strong and too fast, by 2025, Vietnam is reported to have thousands of Pickleball courts, the number of players is up to hundreds of thousands of players. [6] The reason why Pickleball is chosen by many people to play is because the sport is considered a combination of 3 sports including table tennis, badminton and tennis, the playing technique is not too difficult, the physical strength is not too strong, the field space has a suitable size for exercise, the cost of playing is cheap, it is a suitable sport for both men and women, for children from 6 years old and up and the elderly, and the health benefits it brings to the player are the most prominent issues for many people to choose Pickleball to practice.

2. Research Content: Health benefits of Pickleball players

2.1 Improve cardiovascular health.

Pickleball is an effective cardio activity that helps improve cardiovascular health. During the game, the heart rate increases, supporting blood circulation and providing more oxygen to the body. As a result, players can control blood pressure and reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases, such as high blood pressure and coronary artery disease.

A study in the journal Science & Sports showed that Pickleball helps burn more calories than walking for the same amount of time, with an increase in calorie consumption of up to 36%. This increase in heart rate and energy consumption is a factor that helps players improve cardiovascular health effectively and sustainably.

2.2 Helps lose weight and burn calories.

One of the most obvious benefits of playing Pickleball is that it helps you lose weight and burn a significant amount of calories. In each match lasting about an hour, players can burn between 400 - 600 calories, depending on the intensity and style of play. This makes Pickleball an ideal choice for those who want to maintain their figure or improve their weight. By combining cardio and focusing on major muscle groups, you

can reduce excess fat without having to participate in too heavy exercises.

2.3 Improve muscle and bone strength.

Improving muscle and bone strength is one of the top health benefits of Pickleball - this sport brings. Pickleball requires the body to move comprehensively. Fast movements, sudden changes of direction and jumping help the body create force, bounce and beneficial tension on muscles and bones, thereby helping to increase bone strength and durability. Playing Pickleball regularly can also prevent osteoporosis, make bones stronger and reduce the risk of fractures, especially in the elderly.

2.4 Reduce the risk of injury

Compared to other sports such as football, basketball or even tennis, Pickleball has a lower risk of injury. With a smaller court and slower pace, Pickleball does not require strong collisions or high - speed running. This reduces the risk of muscle and joint injuries, especially for the elderly. The movements in Pickleball are usually gentle and do not put too much pressure on the joints, allowing players to participate safely without worrying about injury.

2.5 Improve balance and coordination.

Balance and coordination are essential skills in Pickleball, helping players to make more agile moves and hits. When players have to move continuously on the court, change direction and handle shots from different angles, the body's balance will be trained. The increased coordination between the body and the brain also helps players have faster reflexes in situations that require agility.

2.6 Improve hand - eye coordination.

Pickleball requires players to constantly monitor the ball and react quickly to hit back. This helps to improve hand - eye coordination. This ability is not only important in playing sports but also has a positive impact in daily life, helping to improve reflexes and the ability to handle situations.

2.7 Improve brain health

Exercising in general and Pickleball in particular has been shown to improve cognitive and memory skills. [7] Studies have shown that when you participate in sports, especially Pickleball, your body produces more endorphins - hormones that promote feelings of happiness and reduce stress.

2.8 Develop communication skills and social connections

Another benefit of Pickleball is the opportunity to meet and connect with many people. Since Pickleball can be played in teams of 2 or 4, you will often interact and communicate with teammates as well as opponents. This not only helps improve communication skills but also builds new relationships. In particular, Pickleball is often organized in clubs or in public areas, where people can easily meet and make friends. Joining a Pickleball community can help reduce stress and provide a

sense of belonging to a group, which is important for improving mental health.

2.9 Increase longevity and improve quality of life

Studies show that people who regularly practice Pickleball can live longer than those who are less active. Social activities, like Pickleball, can even extend life expectancy by nearly 10 years compared to non - participants. Pickleball is a great way to improve fitness and build community.

3. Conclusion

Pickleball, a rapidly growing sport that combines the three sports of table tennis, badminton and tennis, offers significant health benefits to players of all ages. This study explores how regular practice of pickleball improves cardiovascular fitness, muscle strength, balance and mental health while promoting social connections. Through a review of existing literature and observational data, the study highlights the role of pickleball in weight management, injury prevention and cognitive improvement. The findings suggest that the accessibility and demand for the sport make it an ideal activity to promote lifelong fitness and community participation, particularly in Vietnam, where the sport has grown significantly in popularity since 2020.

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