

SPECIAL PAPER

Exercise as a Non-Pharmaceutical Treatment Modality to Prevent Comorbidity of Type II Diabetes and Major Depression

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Abstract

Background: Type II diabetes and major depression are both considered epidemics in the United States, with a high rate of comorbidity. Although the diseases have a physiological connection, western medicine still treats them separately, with medications that often exacerbate the other condition and come with debilitating side effects. Exercise has been shown to be an effective treatment modality for both diseases separately, however, no research has been done on exercise as a treatment or preventative measure for the comorbidity of the two conditions.

Aim: The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive review of the literature regarding the efficacy of exercise for the treatment and prevention of comorbid type II diabetes and major depression.

Methodology: Academic Search Primere, Pubmed, Medline and Google Scholar were used to find sources. Search terms such as “type II diabetes, depression, exercise” were used. Sixty three studies were deemed appropriate for this literature review.

Results: Results indicate that exercise is effective at treating type II diabetes and major depression, and would also be effective at preventing the comorbidity of the two. Pharmaceuticals commonly used to treat the two diseases bring with them unwanted side effects which are often more debilitating than the original pathology, whereas side effects of exercise tend to be beneficial to one’s health.

Conclusions: Exercise is an effective way to prevent comorbidity of major depression and type II diabetes without unwanted side effects. It should be implemented as the front line treatment for both type II diabetes and depression.

Key words: type II diabetes, depression, comorbidity, exercise