

**ARTICLE**

# Maintaining the Health of Professional Folk Dancers in Conditions of Physical Recreation

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**ABSTRACT**

Research on the health issues of folk dancers has not been sufficiently developed. A sociological survey of the artists of the National Academic Ensemble of Folk Dance “Joc” from Moldova on the problems of a healthy lifestyle, diet, rest regime, physical and mental state, the attitude of respondents to physical activity in fitness clubs, readiness to engage in physical recreation to improve their condition, prevention diseases, allowed to determine the types of physical recreation and fitness programs recommended for dancers.

## 1. Introduction

Preservation, maintenance, dissemination of cultural heritage is, as it is known, one of the most important goals of cultural policy. Among the central tasks arising from this - relying on this heritage, to create conditions for the development of the cultural potential of the nation, while simultaneously integrating national culture into the world cultural process.

One of the areas, in which the process of interaction of the national cultural heritage with modernity is clearly manifested, is the sphere of artistic culture. The most important place, among other components of this space, is occupied by everything that is associated with the national choreographic culture and, in particular, with folk dance. It represents undoubtedly a fundamentally significant component of the cultural heritage of Moldova, without which it is impossible to understand and present the entire

wealth of national cultural traditions. It should be noted that this component is not only the folk dance itself as a material unit, but also its social existence, its social and functional load, its symbolic meanings and interpretations.

Comprehension of practical and theoretical issues of modern folk dance and those disciplines where dance is closely related to art is one of the most pressing problems, which is expressed in the absence of a clearly expressed semantic content of the requirements for the artistic and aesthetic side of the artists' performance <sup>[1]</sup>. Along with this, the problem of health of dancers (performers) is also among the current problems. And although the age of professional dancers is short-lived, the negative consequences of this profession are manifested even in the process of their vigorous activity <sup>[2]</sup>.

Thus, the relevance of this study is due to the need for a scientific understanding of the health-saving aspects of folk dance.

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In the specialized literature available to us, a scientifically grounded approach to solving the problem of dancers' health in conditions of physical recreation and determining the appropriate means has not been revealed.

## 2. Methodology

The purpose of our research was to identify the means of physical recreation that contribute to the maintenance of the health of professional folk dancers.

The set up goal was resolved using the following research methods: theoretical analysis and generalization of specialized literature data, analysis of the rehearsal process of folk dancers, pedagogical observations, sociological survey, mathematical processing and interpretation of statistical data.

The research was carried out at the bases of the State University of Physical Education and Sports of the Republic of Moldova and the National Academic Ensemble of Folk Dance "Joc".

To determine the main and secondary factors, one way or another, contributing to the development of diseases in dancers, a survey of the artists of the National Academic Ensemble of Folk Dance "Joc" was conducted.

The questionnaire included 34 questions, within which 5 additional questions were asked. The questions given identified the following issues:

- lifestyle;
- food style;
- rest mode;
- the level of employment;
- physical and mental condition;
- the presence of diseases;
- the attitude of respondents to physical activity in fitness clubs;
- willingness to engage in physical recreation to improve their condition and prevent diseases.

The sociological survey was conducted in order to determine the optimal fitness programs for the prevention of diseases of professional dancers.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The survey involved 30 respondents aged 16-45 years. Of these, 15 are men and 15 are women. The questions of the questionnaire at the age of 16-18 years old were answered by 3 men and 3 women, at the age of 19-29 years – 7 men and 6 women, at the age of 30-45 years – 5 men and 6 women. Thus, in percentage terms, the presented ages were (Figure 1): adolescence – 20%, where 50% were men and 50% – women; youth age – 43.33%, of which 53.85% are men and 46.15% are women; mature

age – 36.67% – men – 45.45%, women – 54.55%.

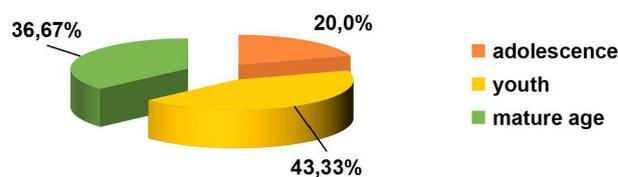


Figure 1. Composition of respondents

Analyzing the answers of the respondents, it can be noted that among the dancers who maintain an improper diet (frequent snacks, fast food, sugary carbonated drinks, eating food that does not contain a sufficient amount of protein, complex carbohydrates, vitamins and microelements) make up 86.67% (Figure 2). This can be compared with the percentage of dancers who prefer passive rest – 83.33%. As you can see, the data for these items are almost identical, which indicates their interdependence. At the same time, among the dancers who prefer passive rest, near the TV and at the computer spend: 3-5 hours – 47.6%; less than 5 hours – 52.4% of respondents.

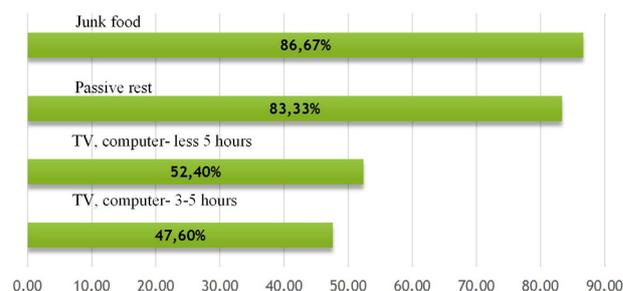


Figure 2. Diet and rest of the respondents

It should be noted that most of the respondents (75%) spend 5-7 hours on sleep, while 18.33% sleep 4-5 hours or have insomnia, and only 6.67% get enough sleep, in 7-9 hours (Figure 3).

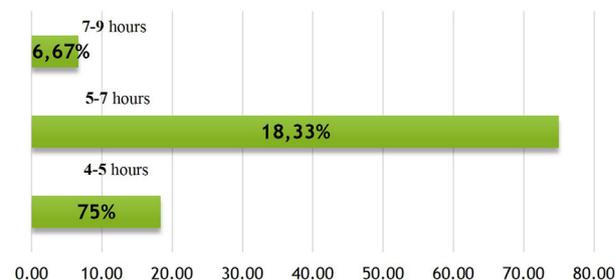
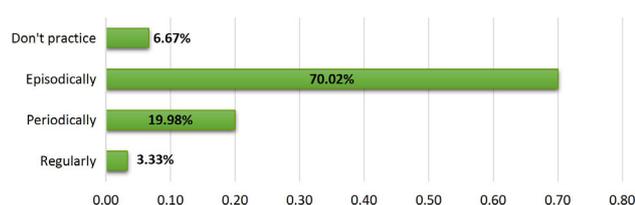


Figure 3. Sleep patterns

Although the profession of dancers reveals a lot of physical activity, which implies the absence of bad habits, still 9.7% of respondents does not exclude smoking, of which 6.37% are men, 3.33% are women.

The survey revealed 86.67% of respondents with diseases (osteocondrosis, migraine, varicose veins, arthralgia, etc.).

As it was expected, 100% of the dancers surveyed believe that health is important in a person's life. However, to the question about engaging in physical activity, the distribution of answers is as follows: 3.33% – exercise regularly (exercise, walking), 19.98% – periodically (go to the vacation home during the season, sometimes to the forest and the beach), 70.02% – episodically (extremely rarely) and 6.67% – answered “no” referring to the lack of time, increased fatigue, illness (Figure 4).



**Figure 4.** Respondents' answers to the question about physical exercise

To the question: “If you were offered a free subscription to a fitness club, would you find time to visit?”, only 63.33% answered “yes”, and from the entire composition of the ensemble these are respondents of adolescence and youth. This suggests that the level of income can influence a person's choice of a healthy lifestyle. In addition, among the choice of fitness programs, it was noted that for women, activities that have a restorative orientation not only in the physical aspect, but also in the psychological one were more attractive. Men, on the other hand, preferred power types in order to form a muscular constitution. These answers served as a starting point for the selection of fitness programs for dancers.

In general, when conducting a sociological study, the set goals have been achieved. It was revealed that such factors as promoting a healthy lifestyle, proper nutrition and fitness activity are of great importance in the fight against diseases.

Analysis of the results of the sociological survey of folk dancers “Joc” made it possible to reveal that along with the so-called “professional” diseases (diseases of the joints and blood vessels of the lower extremities, flat feet, varicose veins), problems of the psycho-emotional state (depression, aggression), dancers acquire this or another illness due to an improper lifestyle, which implies insufficient sleep, improper regimen and nutrition itself, there is no change in physical activity (physical culture and recreational activities).

In order to be able to extend their professional career,

professional dancers must include in their daily routine physical and recreational activities aimed at relieving psychological stress, stretching muscles and joints, strengthening large muscle groups, using breathing practices, concentration, centering and relaxation practices.

From this point of view, we have identified the types of physical recreation for all folk dancers<sup>[3]</sup>: *Health Walking, Running, Swimming, Rowing, Cycling, Rollerblading, Sports and Outdoor Games*; as well as fitness programs recommended for women: *Callanetics, Pilates, Fitball, Stretching, Yoga, and Bodybuilding* recommended for men.

#### 4. Folk Dancers Recommendations for Physical Exercise

When using strength exercises, light weights with multiple repetitions are recommended, in order to avoid unnecessary stress on the joints and ligaments<sup>[4]</sup>.

As part of the rehabilitation process, it is proposed to use a program consisting in alternating sub-tolerant, mixed and tolerant load regimes. The method of establishing tolerance to physical activity (on a treadmill or ergometer bicycle) with the identification of a “critical” heart rate and determination of the optimal one, makes it possible to more efficiently program physical activities.

In order to do this, it is recommended to set the limiting heart rate at which unfavourable shifts in dancers begin, both from the cardiovascular system and autonomic reactions, that is, find a “critical” pulse, calculate the optimal pulse and, focusing on it, build a physiological curve classes. To control and regulate a given program, it is recommended to use heart rate monitors, which make it possible to complete pedagogical control over group exercises, individualize physical activity in conditions of group exercises, and change the nature of the load without changing the set heart rate. All sets of exercises should be tailored to the individual characteristics of each dancer.

A general approach to the aerobic physical activity (walking, running, cycling, swimming, playing, etc.) is to exercise it in the fresh air. However, in some cases, you can exercise not only in the fresh air, but also in a room that is equipped with cardiovascular equipment<sup>[5]</sup>.

#### 5. Conclusions

As a result of studying specialized literature in the field of physical recreation, health-improving training, we have noted that research on the problems of maintaining health in people whose profession involves significant physical activity (athletes, ballet dancers, pop and folk dancers) have not been sufficiently developed. Basically, they are

of an informational nature, which does not allow determining the details of the correctional and health-improving method.

The sociological survey of the artists of the folk dance ensemble “Joc” on the problems of a healthy lifestyle, eating style, rest regime, physical and mental state, the attitude of respondents to physical activity in fitness clubs, readiness to engage in physical recreation to improve their condition, prevent diseases, allowed to determine types of physical recreation and fitness programs recommended for dancers.

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