



CAN FAMILY DOCTORS INCREASE THE WILLINGNESS OF MEN TO PARTICIPATE IN HEALTH COURSES WITHIN COMMUNITY MEDICINE?

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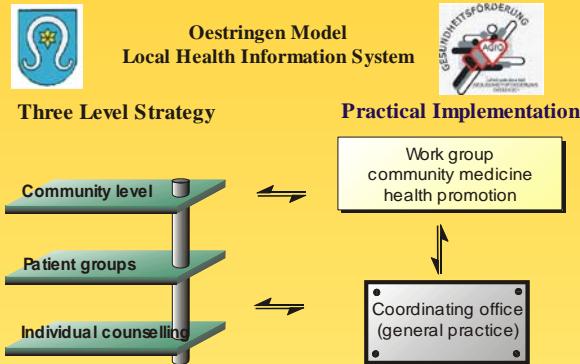


Health group „men only“, Östringen



Background: In Oestringen, a German town of 13.400 inhabitants near Heidelberg, family practice-based surveys enable the assessment of cardiovascular risk factors after intervention. Over time, the experience was confirmed that men between the ages of 30 and 60 are rarely ready to participate in health courses: 80% women, 20% men, half of this minority under 60 years. Our aim was to increase their willingness to participate.

Methods: In some German towns, primary care physicians cooperate with each other and with schools, coaches of sports clubs as well as local businesses, by applying a three level strategy: the individual consultation at the doctor's office (1st level) is expanded to include educational patient groups in the doctor's office (2nd level) and within the community (3rd level). In 2005, we carried out the last of seven cross sectional surveys, each survey including approx. 1.000 persons, using a special questionnaire with a concrete offer to increase the willingness of men with risk factors to take part in special health courses with a walking group for men only.



Wiesemann, ZFA 1993

Part of the questionnaire:

If you are **male**, between 30 und 60 years old, with low physical activity (under 45 minutes twice a week) would you like to participating a group for health promotion counseled by a physician experienced in sports medicine / healthy living?

yes no

Your values

Blood pressure: _____ mmHg Date: _____

BMI: _____

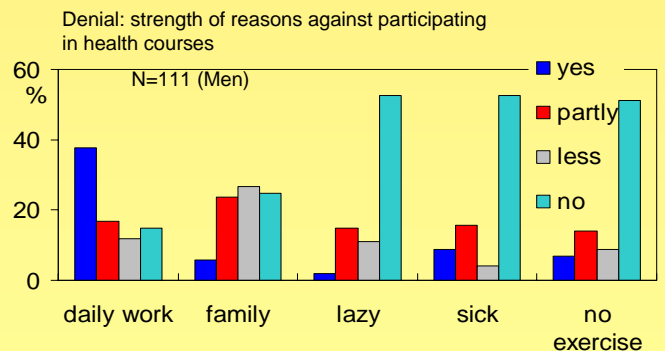
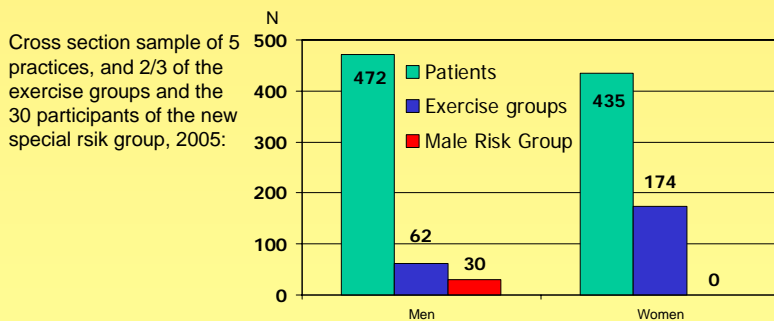
Cholesterol: _____ mg/dl Date: _____

HDL: _____ mg/dl

LDL: _____ mg/dl HbA1c (only if diabetes): _____

Triglycerides: _____ mg/dl

Results: During the last 15 years, the two risk factors smoking and hypertension could be reduced by 13 or 40%, respectively. As a consequence of the last survey with its special offer, 86 out of 197 men were interested in the health course, 111 explained their denial, 30 had at least two risk factors; finally, 23 succeeded in participating for more than 6 months up to now.



Conclusion:

Within community medicine, special offers of primary care physicians can motivate more men to participate in health courses for reducing CVD-risk factors. Direct addressing and a local exercise based programme for fitness and nutrition are more important than the gender aspect.

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