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A Study Proves the Positive Effects of Heart Rehabilitation Programs on Patients

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University of Granada researchers affirm that it is "essential" that heart rehabilitation programs aimed at patients with any heart disease are established and provided to cardiac patients. The study included a sample of 200 patients suffering from heart disease.

A research conducted at the University of Granada has demonstrated the efficiency of a heart rehabilitation program aimed at patients suffering from heart disease. The authors of this study affirm that it is essential that heart rehabilitation programs aimed at cardiac patients are established. In Spain, a low percentage of cardiac patients participate in this type of programs, as compared to the rest of Europe.

The study included a sample of 200 patients suffering from heart disease, who were members of the Association of Cardiac Patients of Granada, Spain. Subjects were assigned to two groups: the intervention group participated in a heart rehabilitation program conducted by the Association mentioned above, while the second group was excluded from the rehabilitation program. Both groups underwent a clinical-functional study and answered a survey on risk factors associated with their heart disease.

The results obtained revealed that the subjects who took part of the heart rehabilitation program presented lower total cholesterol and plasma triglyceride levels, as compared to the other group. Furthermore, the subjects in the intervention group exhibited healthier eating habits and did physical exercise more frequently than subjects in the other group. Therefore, the heart rehabilitation program developed by these researchers "helps enhance certain risk factors for heart disease, and encourages patients to have healthy eating and life habits, which is essential for the prevention of heart diseases".

Leading Cause of Death

Heart diseases represent the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in industrialized countries as Spain. The high prevalence and economic cost of heart diseases require the implementation of prevention programs, the promotion of healthy habits, and control of risk factors for heart diseases. Heart rehabilitation programs are essential to improve secondary prevention of heart diseases.

This study was conducted by María Esther Sánchez Entrena, a member of the Physiology Department of the University of Granada School of Pharmacy, and coordinated by professors Magdalena López Frías, Teresa Nestares Pleguezuelo and Carlos De Teresa Galván. The study was conducted in collaboration with the Centro Andaluz de Medicina del Deporte and Department of Health of Granada City Hall.

The results of this study have been partially published in the journal *Annals of Nutrition&Metabolism*.

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