Abstract

Objective. To evaluate the effect of structured vs. non-structured internet-delivered exercise recommendations on aerobic exercise capacity and cardiovascular risk profile in overweight sedentary employees. Methods. 140 employees of an automobile company (11 BMI 29.0 kg/m2 (25.0?34.8)) were randomized in a 3:2 ratio to an intervention group receiving structured exercise schedules or a control group choosing workouts individually via an interactive website. The 12-week intervention took place in Munich, Germany, during summer 2008. Main outcome measure was performance at the lactate anaerobic threshold (PAT/kg) during ergometry. Results. 77 participants completed the study. The intervention group (n=50) improved significantly in PAT/kg ((mean (SD)) 1.68 (0.31) vs. 1.81 (0.33) W/kg; p=0.002), VO2peak (3.21 (0.63) vs. 3.35 (0.74) L/ min; p=0.04), and waist circumference (100.5 (7.9) vs. 99.0 (7.8) cm; p=0.001). The control group (n=27) improved significantly in PAT/kg (1.59 (0.38) vs. 1.80 (0.49); pb0.001) and waist circumference (101.9 (8.7) vs.
98.3 (8.5) cm; pb0.001), but not in VO2peak. No significant between group differences in these outcome measures were noted. Conclusion. Structured, internet-delivered exercise recommendations are not superior to internet-delivered non-structured exercise recommendations in a workplace setting. Both lifestyle intervention strategies are, however, limited by high dropout rates.

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