

RESEARCH RELATED TO MOVEMENT, EXERCISE AND SPORT

Mobility is a precious gift of life. The longer we can maintain our mobility, the greater our independence and the better our quality of life. It goes without saying, too, that the longer we can maintain our mobility, the less impact we will have on the health care system. We are on the threshold of a new era in human mobility. Aided by growing public awareness and support of organizations and corporations, like the IOC and Pfizer, research scientists are making dramatic progress in increasing our knowledge and understanding of mobility.

This is certainly the case in the field of movement, exercise and sport. Questions dealing with movement, exercise and sport have increasingly been studied in the attempt to help humankind improve quality of life. Movement is a precious gift and everything that *improves mobility* has high value for each and every one of us. Thus, the study of factors relevant for movement and mobility is of utmost importance for the well-being of humankind.

Research studies addressing issues of movement and mobility include at least three major topics:

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- basic questions of human and animal movement,
- prevention of deterioration of the ability to move and
- rehabilitation of functions of the human body after injury.

These aspects of scientific research have grown dramatically in the last 50 years. Today, a large group of scientists with varied professional backgrounds from different faculties in many different countries are involved in attempting to answer such questions. Consequently, the understanding of the importance of exercise for the proper functioning of the human and animal body is growing rapidly.

The importance of the findings of such studies is illustrated by:

- changes in medical treatment and prevention of cardiac problems;
- new approaches in treatment and rehabilitation of joint and ligament injuries;
- increasing understanding of the functioning of muscles;

- attempts to counterbalance negative effects of sedentary life styles on obesity with exercise;
- use of appropriate nutrition for optimal body functioning and
- use of strength training in centers for seniors.

These are just a few obvious applications. Each has substantial importance for the well being of individuals. Furthermore, the application of these findings has importance for the general health of entire nations and, consequently, an effect on the health care budgets of these countries. Just imagine the possible savings for health care if the patrons of seniors' homes can move using their own muscle strength. And imagine the effect this has on the life quality of each individual senior.

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