

## Promotion of physical and mental health and well-being in the university environment

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The place where higher level education happens and the knowledge is generated and where it is sought to analyze and meet the challenges of society, the University is a privileged space to know the universal culture and the various sciences, to create and spread the knowledge, possessing the role of strengthen citizenship and developing the restlessness of the social being<sup>(1-2)</sup>.

However, in this same environment, a lot of productivity is required, both of the students and of the professors and non-teaching workers. There is a charge for numerous surveys that require funding; there is the requirement of papers published in national and international journals with good qualifications; it is necessary to innovate the teaching, aiming that the subjects treated in the disciplines motivate the learning of the students; there is an indication that the courses are offered in other language in order to attract students from different countries; there is a need to obtain financial resources, for the development of various projects, among others. In the middle of this universe, there is also, within the scope of public universities, the question of the contingency of financial resources, which has made it difficult to carry out teaching and research activities. In addition, university managers follow with interest the determinations of the exact positions of the universities in relation to those of other countries, which occur periodically, requiring their personnel to improve their performances in these rankings.

This environment, which turns out to be very competitive, affects the health of the triad made up of professors, technical-administrative staff and students, undergraduate and graduate students.

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From this, changes are observed to the physical and mental health, undesirable habits and coexistence with varied risk agents among these people. Among these problems are vocal changes<sup>(3)</sup>, stress and osteo-muscular symptoms<sup>(4)</sup>, physical inactivity that may be associated with the risk for Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases<sup>(5)</sup>, alcohol use and / or other drugs<sup>(6-7)</sup>, the syndrome of professional exhaustion<sup>(8-9)</sup>, among others.

In this sense it becomes necessary to seek, in the Universities, a healthier environment, with the presence of well-being, so that the people who are in it do not get sick.

The Nursing School of Ribeirão Preto-USP coordinated a study on Welfare in Universities, which happened simultaneously with five other Brazilian nursing schools, from state and federal universities, in the Northeast, South, Center-West and Southeast regions. The project involved a team of nurses, physiotherapists, nutritionists, physical educators, with the collaboration of undergraduate and graduate students. During a three-month period, at all sites, walking activities (three times a week), nutritional guidelines (once a week), checking of vital parameters, with emphasis on Blood Pressure (before the start of activities and after its closure), verification of well-being levels, isostretching activities (twice a week), among others. Considering that not all nursing schools had undergraduate activities, the study was directed to nursing undergraduates and to the teaching and non-teaching workers of these universities.

The results showed that the interventions proposed were effective in improving the quality of life of teachers, non-teachers and students of the universities investigated. In addition, they provided a better understanding about the health situation, with the monitoring of vital signs, fatigue, well being, musculoskeletal pain, among others. In the evaluation of the altered health of the participants, it was observed that the symptoms were reduced after the interventions<sup>(10)</sup>.


Thus, it was considered that the participants started to have a better perception of the symptoms, managing to eliminate them with regular activities and food adaptation. In the assessment of well-being, particularly among undergraduates, it was noticed that the final values were increased in relation to the initial values, evidencing that the interventions were satisfactory for the students. However, part of the population failed to achieve satisfactory levels of fatigue and pain reduction<sup>(10)</sup>.

These results showed that there is a need for more investments in research aimed at the health of students, professors and non-teaching workers of Brazilian universities, aiming to prevent physical and mental illness, promoting actions to improve living, working and study of this population.

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