The effect of aerobic training on psychosocial morbidity and symptoms in patients with asthma


Setting the scene:
To study the effect of aerobic training on psychosocial morbidity and symptoms in patients with asthma.

What did they do?
A total of 101 patients were randomly assigned to either a control group or an aerobic training group and studied during the period between medical consultations. Control group patients (educational program plus breathing exercises) (n=51) and training group patients (educational program plus breathing exercises plus aerobic training) (n=50) were followed twice a week during 3 months period. HRQoL (Health Related Quality of Life) questionnaire and level of anxiety and depression were quantified before and after treatment. Asthma symptoms were evaluated monthly. At 3 months; the domains (physical limitations, frequency of symptoms, and psychosocial) and total scores of HRQoL significantly improved only in training group (P<0.001); the number of asthma-symptoms-free days and anxiety and depression levels also significantly improved in this group (p<0.001). In addition, a linear relationship between improvement in aerobic capacity and the days without asthma symptoms was observed (r=0.47, p<0.01).

Takeaway message:
Results of the study suggest that aerobic training can play an important role in the clinical managements of patients with persistent asthma. Further, they may be especially useful for patients with higher degrees of psychosocial distress.