THE STUDY ABOUT HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS AND PRACTICE METHODS OF THE JAPANESE MIDDLE AGED GOLFER

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Objective
The purpose of this study was to determine about health consciousness levels and practice methods of Japanese middle aged golfers by means of a questionnaire in four districts of Japan (Kanto, Kansai, Hokkaido and Kyushu). Recent studies have shown that golf is not a major factor in the health and exercise routine of middle-aged persons who play golf. At the same time, more middle-aged people play golf than any other sports, and such golfers have a strong interest in golf skills and health. This study clarifies the main reason why they became interested in fitness and health if they play golf habitually.

Method
The survey was conducted over a one-year period between July 2004 and October 2005. The questionnaire consisted of questions in general areas:
1) Gender, age, height, body mass, golfer’s playing history.
2) Initial motivation for taking up golf. 3) The objective of golf.
4) Frequency and time for additional sports.

Results
This study collected 1008 responses (Male: 748, Female: 260). The average age of respondents was 57.1 years old. The average golfer’s playing history was 19.0 years (Male: 21.5 years, Female: 10.9 years). With respect to the motivation to take up the sports of golf, most male golfers gave friends as their first reason, followed by my boss as their second reason. Among female golfers, the first reason given was other, and the second reason given was friends.

The other results were as follows:
1. The playing history of male golfers was almost twice as long as that of female golfers.
2. The primary objective of playing male and female respondents was health maintenance, not skill improvement.
3. Male and female golfers practice at a golf range more than once per week, and they play at a golf course nearly three times per month. Female golfers tended to play at a golf course, rather than practicing at a golf range.
4. Male golfers play other sports about 3.0 times per week and female golfers about 2.4 times per week.
Golf is not so physically demanding for middle aged golfers who are receiving sufficient exercise. For this reason they will habitually play additional other sports if they want to improve more their score and skill level. This study clarified that middle aged golfers who habitually engage in additional other sports considered golf to be good for their health.

Keywords: Golf