

Será a Caminhada pela DPOC uma estratégia educativa eficaz para a comunidade?

Is Walk for COPD an effective educative strategy for the community?

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Background: Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. Increase prevention and community awareness of COPD is therefore of major importance. Educational strategies, e.g., walks and runs, have shown to be effective enhancing consciousness of several chronic diseases, and thus may also be effective in COPD.

Objective: To assess the effectiveness of a community activity entitled “Walk for COPD” to raise awareness about this disease.

Materials and Methods: A 3.5 km walk took place at Aveiro to celebrate the World COPD day. This event was released through media, social network and posters around the city. During the Walk for COPD, participants were presented with several health messages and didactic walk stations (e.g., patient with COPD testimony, exposition of pictures, quiz questions with prizes, practice of dyspnoea relief positions). At the end, some participants were randomly selected to answer two multiple-choice questions regarding their knowledge about COPD.

Results: 166 subjects (35.7% male; 35.0±15.9 [11-80] years) participated and 88 (53%) answered the questions. 95.5% (n=84) improved their knowledge about COPD, of these 53.9% (n=41) had never heard of COPD and 46.1% (n=35) knew the disease, but significantly increased their knowledge during the event.

Discussion: Walk for COPD increased the knowledge of most participants about this disease, demonstrating that this kind of initiatives have great potential to be used as educative strategy in the community. More studies are needed to assess the potential of this educative strategy in COPD prevention.

Conclusions: Walk for COPD has potential to be used as educative strategy in the community.

Key-words: COPD; Community; Education.