THE EFFECTS OF PHYSICAL EXERCISE ON TOTAL BODY FAT CONTENT

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Skinfold thicknesses were measured at four selected sites- Biceps, Triceps Subscapular and Suprailiac in 179 male Sri Lankan athletes who constituted the national training pools for swimming, rugger and athletics.

For the purpose of comparison identical measurements were taken from 200 age matched sedentary university students who were living in almost identical conditions but not taking in any organised physical training programmes.

Linear regression equations for the different age groups were used for the prediction of body density from the logarithm of the sum of the skinfold thickness at the four sites and the body fat content was calculated from density using the equation of Siri (1956).

The sedentary students were found to have the highest body fat content (12.9%) while the army long distance runners had the lowest (6.1%).

Though no significant differences were observed in the total body fat content among the swimmers, rugby players, the athletes who took part in field events and the sedentary students, very significant differences were observed in the total body fat content of the athletes who participated in track events and the sedentary group.

It appears that endurance training produces a marked lowering of the total body fat content.

References

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