PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF AIDS THROUGH SPORTS

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ABSTRACT

Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a disease caused by the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV). It is the most devastating infectious diseases in modern times. Statistics from the World Health Organization and Health Agencies all over the world show that there is a steady rise in the number of people getting infected with HIV and dying of AIDS, a majority of whom are from Africa. To date, despite the ongoing extensive research, no cure exists for aids. However, the available antiretroviral drugs are only useful in supporting the immune system and thereby reducing the effect of the opportunistic infections suffered by AIDS victims.

Since there is no cure for AIDS, prevention is the only weapon against the disease. The prerequisite for appropriate prevention measures is the enlightenment of people about the nature, modes of transmission and adverse effects of the disease. It is through such awareness about the disease that people can change their behaviour and lifestyles to evade the risk of contracting the killer-disease. Those how are already infected with HIV also need care and guidance to adopt the kind of behaviour and lifestyles that will enable them lead quality lives and assist in the efforts to prevent further spread of the disease.

It is important for the sports fraternity to understand the relationship between Sports and HIV- AIDS. The injuries that occur in the combat and contact Sports can be a dangerous avenue through which HIV can be transmitted. Promiscuous behaviour exhibited in sports training camps and athletic meets may promote fast spread of the disease. On the other hand, Sports is a useful tool through which the spread of HIV-AIDS can be controlled. Sports events are important for a in which HIV- AIDS Awareness campaigns can be conducted. Sports provide more useful pass time activities for idlers and those who lack what to do with their free time and thereby preventing them from engaging in antisocial activities, including risky sexual relationship. Suitable physical activity is also beneficial to HIV-AIDS victims who, in actual fact, become more vulnerable to many opportunistic infections.

Key words: HIV - AIDS, Prevention, Control, Sport