

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on physical inactivity, health and medical costs: A 4-year longitudinal analysis of objectively measured-walking behavior in large cohort.

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The purpose of this study is to clarify the changes in the amount of daily physical activity associated with COVID-19 and the associated impact on medical expenses for the number of steps taken in daily life from 2018 to 2021, targeting residents of small local cities. The subjects of this study were adults living in small provincial cities in the Chugoku region. All subjects were the population of 5,289 people who had participated in the health incentive project sponsored by the local government since 2018. In this study, daily physical activity was measured using a pedometer (AM150, manufactured by Tanita) with a built-in 3-axis accelerometer. A significant difference was observed in the average amount of walking in 2021 compared to 2018. Although no significant difference was observed in the number of days with 8,000 or more steps, the number of days with less than 4,000 steps increased. For those whose medical expenses increased from 2018 to 2021, the amount of walking in daily life significantly decreased from 2018 to 2021. During the Covid-19 epidemic from 2018 to 2021, the decrease in walking was thought to be one of the reasons for the increase in medical costs.