



Promoting healthy behaviour and improving health outcomes through sporting organisation programmes

Evidence in numbers



This review included **20 studies** and involved **8179** people in high income countries.

Authors' findings

- Sporting organisation programmes probably lead to people being slightly more physically active.
- Confidence in the evidence ranged from very low to moderate: the studies involved relatively small participant groups, so the findings provide valuable preliminary insights and highlight the opportunity for further research with larger samples.
- Some studies focused on very specific groups, for example, much of the evidence came from studies of men with health risks such as overweight or obesity, and male football supporters.

Hodder RK, O'Brien KM, Al-Gobari M, et al. Interventions implemented through sporting organisations for promoting healthy behaviour or improving health outcomes. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2025, Issue 1. Art. No.: CD012170. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD012170.pub2. Accessed 03 February 2026.

Key messages



Sporting organisation programmes probably lead to people being slightly more physically active but may make little or no difference to the amount of time people are inactive or sedentary.



Compared to the control groups, people involved with sporting organisation programmes:

- Probably increased their physical activity by 7.4 minutes per day and eat more fruits and vegetables.
- It is uncertain whether the sporting organisation programmes had an impact on the consumption of sugary drinks, alcohol or tobacco use.
- It is uncertain whether sporting club programmes had any unwanted, harmful consequences, since very few studies reporting information about unintended negative effects.



About Cochrane South Africa

This Plain Language Summary was produced by Cochrane South Africa, at the South African Medical Research Council, which seeks to improve public health outcomes through producing, promoting, and translating high-quality evidence-based research.



For further information, contact the helpdesk at cochranesa@mrc.ac.za

