

HEALTH BENEFITS: VETERANS TENNIS

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The following research was taken from a study conducted with a partial aim of finding out the physiological effects of 1 hour of tennis on male veteran (mean age = 44.6 years) tennis players. A comparison between advanced (ITN 3-5) and recreational (ITN 7-9) players was produced.

RESULTS:

Distance Covered

1. Advanced tennis players cover about 3.5km during a one-hour tennis match, and recreational players about 3.2km.

Heart Rate

2. Average heart rate during tennis match play is fairly similar in advanced vs. recreational players and is around 150 bpm (148.3 vs. 149.8). This is about 80% of maximum heart rate (80.4% vs. 80.7 %).

Oxygen Consumption

3. Average oxygen consumption (VO_2) during play was fairly similar in advanced and recreational players (24.5 ml/kg/min vs. 23.3 ml/kg/min, $p = 0.54$). This equalled (54.9 (9.5) % vs. 53.0 (7.1)%, $p = 0.55$) of VO_{2max} .

Motion Analysis

4. Most of the time was spent walking (46 vs 42 min), followed by jogging (6 vs 7.5 min), striding (2.1 vs 3.6 min) sprinting (0.5 vs 1.20 min) and sprinting 11 vs 30 s), in advanced vs recreational players, respectively.

WHAT DOES THIS STUDY SHOW:

Advanced veteran male tennis players are able to cover a significantly longer running distance at a lower running speed than recreational tennis players, even though their activity profile is similar.

We hypothesise that this is the result of the advanced players` ability to hit wider angles and anticipate better, resulting in a more continuous movement pattern. In addition, regular tennis match-play at both an advanced and a recreational level meets the exercise recommendations for healthy adults.

Study Reference:

Fernandez-Fernandez, J., D. Sanz-Rivas, Cristobal Sanchez-Muñoz, B.M. Pluim, I.Tiemessen, & A. Mendez-Villanueva (2008) 'Movement patterns and physiological profile in male veteran tennis players: A comparison between advanced and recreational players', *Unpublished*