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Effect of playing Nathaswaram on lung function

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Objectives: To compare the respiratory function of Nathaswaram players with other players of the same troupe in Colombo district.

Methods: A descriptive study was conducted on 30 nathaswaram players and 30 other instrument players in Colombo district. Information of sociodemographic variables, habits and illnesses were obtained using an interviewer administered questionnaire. Clinical examination was conducted and respiratory function tests were performed using a Vitalograph spirometer.

Results: The mean age, height and weight of the players and other players were comparable ($p > 0.05$). The mean FVC of the Nathaswaram players was statistically significantly higher than the other players ($2.99 \text{ L} \pm 0.79 \text{ SD}$ of players Vs $2.11 \text{ L} \pm 0.84 \text{ SD}$ of controls, $p < 0.05$). The mean FEV1 of the Nathaswaram players were statistically significantly higher than the other players ($2.81 \text{ L} \pm 0.84 \text{ SD}$ of players Vs $1.90 \text{ L} \pm 0.78 \text{ SD}$ of controls, $p < 0.05$). The mean FEF of the Nathaswaram players were statistically significantly higher than the other players ($4.10 \text{ L} \pm 1.41 \text{ SD}$ of players Vs $3.45 \text{ L} \pm 1.63 \text{ SD}$ of controls, $p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: This study suggests regular playing of the Nathaswaram improves large airway function. However the smaller airway function did not show any significant change.