Series on Exercise in Cardiovascular Disease

For more than a half century, exercise testing has remained a readily available and reliable clinical tool to evaluate patients with known or suspected cardiovascular disease. Yet, data continue to emerge regarding novel applications of this durable technology. Exercise, however, has taken on a new role in contemporary clinical cardiology for its therapeutic benefits in both the primary and secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease. While it has long been recognized that exercise and physical activity confer health, the data that support this observation are now robust and far-reaching. Understanding the mechanisms by which exercise yields its myriad of benefits has become a prolific area of research, the findings of which tell an interesting and evolving story that spans from molecular interactions to integrated physiological systems.

Accordingly, in this Circulation thematic review series on Exercise in Cardiovascular Disease, the reader will be treated to the extensive knowledge and insight of a remarkable group of experts who provide a fresh look at exercise from several vantage points—from epidemiology to biology to clinical applications. The first three articles in this series will focus on exercise and its role in cardiovascular protection; the four articles that follow will provide a unique look at several specific applications of exercise testing. These will address children with congenital heart disease, women, nonatherosclerotic heart disease, and cardiopulmonary testing. I am grateful to the many authors of this remarkable series whose words lead us to further appreciate the expanding roles of exercise in the care of patients with cardiovascular disease, and stimulate the inquisitive mind to probe the many unanswered questions in this field through future research.

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