



Dr. Christine E. Haycock, a surgeon in Newark, N.J., also is star pitcher for the North Bergen Co-Eds softball team, New Jersey champions last season. Twice she has been state women's fencing champion, and has also played field hockey, basketball, and golf. A major in the U. S. Army Reserve, Dr. Haycock spent two years on active duty and was the Army's first woman interne at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C.

I'M TIRED of hearing flabby, round-shouldered women patients complain to me that they have no energy, feel tense, and need a tranquilizer. I contend that if more American women went in regularly for almost any form of athletics or exercise, we doctors would see fewer of them in our waiting rooms.

There are many reasons why women should stop sitting around and getting soft. Much of their diet problem is rooted in submerged emotional conflicts. Recurrent tension and pressures of everyday life—which often lead to chronic overeating—can be released in the excitement of a competitive game, whether it's golf, table tennis, bowling, or some other sport.

Such physical activity should be part of a daily routine, even if it's nothing more than an hour's swim at the local "Y." It should be fun, giving a feeling of accomplishment, rather than performed in a lackadaisical manner.

Women athletes seldom need a tranquilizer. I know that when I'm out there on the mound pitching a softball game, I forget my personal problems and release my frustrations and hostilities.

In my practice, I see many women who suffer from swollen ankles. Office workers and factory girls who sit at a desk or bench all day need muscular action to prevent or overcome this condition. Indulging in a sport also gives a woman a good chance to expand her lungs, and if she's a heavy smoker it will aid in curbing the habit. And for those afflicted with insomnia, exercise that leaves a woman pleasantly tired and relaxed will enable her to drop off to sleep more easily.

EVEN DURING a normal pregnancy, I believe women can continue to indulge in sports. They can play golf, for instance, right up to the seventh month and occasionally beyond. If they're inactive, pregnant women tend to overeat, become overweight, and run the risk of developing toxemia.

Recently, I visited a friend who was four months pregnant. She behaved like an invalid; her husband waited on her, hand and foot. "You'll never be in such good physical condition as you are now," I told her. "You ought to get out of that lounge chair and go back to your bowling."

Which sports are appropriate for the average housewife or working woman? Tennis utilizes almost every muscle you have without overdeveloping any one muscle. Bowling offers enough competitive drive so that you can become mad at the ball when it slips into the gutter. Fencing enhances



Brazilian
tennis champion
Maria Bueno

LET'S HAVE MORE WOMEN IN SPORTS

Unladylike? Nonsense,
says this woman
doctor who offers her
prescription for greater
zest, poise, health, and beauty

By CHRISTINE E. HAYCOCK, M.D.
with Theodore Irwin

your sense of balance. Basketball is fine for girls—and for women not over 30—but a player must be dexterous, swift on her feet, have good wind, and be in top condition. Golf lures you out into the open air, strengthens your arm, shoulder, and back muscles, and helps slim that waistline.

Even calisthenics at home are an acceptable form of exercise, but generally women find push-ups a dull chore. It's preferable to go to your local "Y" for a swim or take a slenderizing course with other women. Walking is of real value only if it's done for a fair distance, at least a mile each day.

I suspect that many women still abhor the notion of taking part in competitive sport because of the stigma that used to be attached to female athletes. In the past, certain sports were considered unladylike and the participants too aggressive. As a result, grace, glamour, and figure have been accentuated in athletics for women, as in ice skating, swimming, and tennis. This prevailing trend has dropped our women's sports level below that of many European countries.

We have had some superb women athletes who have added luster to the world of sports. The late Babe Didrikson Zaharias was one of the greatest women athletes of all time. In the recent Olympics, Wilma Rudolph was the first American girl to win three gold medals in track and field. Patty Berg proved that you don't need a great deal of brawn to play golf. While Gussie Moran was never a brilliant tennis player, her famous lace panties made the sport more appealing to our sex.

TOO OFTEN doctors hear what we have come to call the "Teen-Age Lament." I encounter this syndrome when Mama brings her pudgy 15-year-old daughter to my office. "Mary is tired all the time," I am informed. "She has headaches and backaches, and she has no appetite."

Usually it develops that Mary is a sitter, not a doer. Her chief interests are boys and clothes. Like many teen-agers, Mary fears that becoming an "athlete" will hurt her chances with the boys. On the contrary, exercise will give her poise, straighten her back, and help her lose that "hippy" look.

What our nation needs, in my opinion, are more opportunities for teen-age girls to enter organized sports such as softball, basketball, and volleyball leagues. It doesn't have to be a compulsory mass program as in the Soviet Union. Our sports facilities for girls should be made so enticing that teen-agers would inevitably be drawn to athletics as a thoroughly enjoyable activity. This sort of program requires re-education of our school boards, and it should be discussed and supported by PTAs and women's clubs.

I keep thinking of a gentle, white-haired 78-year-old widow who consulted me in my office a few weeks ago. On examination I found that her blood pressure was rather high, which is not unusual for a woman of her age. Actually, she looked at least 10 years younger.

What was she worried about, then? "Doctor," she asked apprehensively, "will I have to give up my golf?"

I wish there were many more women like her!

COVER:

Artist Homer Hill poses all the familiar signs of spring against a background of the old-time favorite score, "Spring Is Here!" by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart.

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