Abstract
This study aimed to get to know the perceptions of undergraduate students from the University of São Paulo College of Nursing about physical exercise as an instrument to maintain health and well being. Data were collected through the application of a questionnaire in class, involving 122 undergraduate students. In this group, 52.23% believed that physical exercise should only be recommended to people with health problems. Only 8% thought that exercise can prevent diseases, and only 6.61% uses protection equipment. Therefore, we concluded that nursing students need to be better prepared to be able to intervene correctly as professionals.

Keywords
Motor activity, nursing, health.