

A Randomized Controlled Trial of Progressive Resistance Training in Depressed Elders

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OBJECTIVES:

The researchers tested the hypothesis that strength training would reduce depression while also improving physical capacity, quality of life, morale, function and self efficacy without adverse events in an older, significantly depressed population. Thirty two subjects aged 60-84 were placed, for 10 weeks, in either a supervised strength training program three times per week or an attention-control group.

RESULTS:

Strength training significantly reduced all depression measures. In addition, quality of life sub-scales of body pain, vitality, social functioning and role emotional were all significantly improved by exercise when compared to the controls. Strength increased an average of 33% in exercisers and decreased by \approx 2% in controls. Intensity of training was closely related to decreases in depression scores.

SUMMARY:

Strength training is an effective antidepressant in depressed elders, while also improving strength, morale, and quality of life. While no one form of exercise has been proven superior in reducing depression, strength training in two published studies had higher compliance and lower drop-out rates than has been shown with aerobic exercise. This study provides further evidence that strength training should be an integral part of exercise programming for seniors.

KEISER PIECES USED:

Chest press, lat. pull down, leg press, leg extension.