

Health Benefits of Exercise

Volume 16, Issue 9



EXERCISE IN A HEALTH CLUB IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE IN ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENTS



Many older adults live in assisted living communities, and often there is little opportunity for exercise. Many studies show the benefits of exercise for older adults, including fall prevention and increased quality of life. Now, a study in the *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity* looked at strategies to encourage assisted living residents to be more active by maintaining a health club membership.

The study followed 10 residents who utilized a health club over a one-year period. The findings showed that the participants increased their active time and lower body strength and reported improved quality of life and life satisfaction when provided adequate space and equipment, access to trained staff, and additional resources and support. These participants valued and prioritized exercise and took pride in their self-identification as “exercisers.” Access to updated equipment, professional and knowledgeable staff, and

continued support are all things provided by health clubs across the globe.

EXERCISE IMPROVES SYMPTOMS OF OBESITY-RELATED LIVER DISEASE



One side effect of obesity is obesity-related liver disease, which is characterized by fat accumulation in the liver, inflammation, and liver damage. Typically, weight loss is the go-to treatment, but now research is indicating that exercise training – independent of weight loss – may improve symptoms of obesity-related liver disease.

The study, published in *Medical Science in Sports and Exercise*, looked at over 100 obese men with obesity-related liver disease who had completed a 12-week exercise program with no dietary restriction and compared them to men who completed a 12-week diet regimen with no exercise component. Results showed that the diet group lost more weight and body fat, but the exercise group saw similar improvements in other disease markers, including liver enzyme levels and insulin resistance. Furthermore, in participants with more severe progression of the disease, exercise training was effective in reducing inflammation and stress. These findings indicate that exercise can be beneficial for people with obesity-

related liver disease, even in the absence of weight loss. Many health clubs provide a safe environment and a variety of programs to help new exercisers get active and improve their health.

HEAVY LIFTING IS SAFE FOR WOMEN WITH BREAST CANCER-RELATED LYMPHEDEMA



Breast cancer-related lymphedema (BRCL) is a possible side effect of breast cancer treatment, usually occurring in the months following surgery or radiation and

characterized by abnormal swelling in the arm, hand, or chest wall. Weight lifting has great potential to help manage symptoms of BRCL, however there have been concerns about safety and effectiveness. This study, published in the *Journal of Cancer Survivorship*, tested the impact of two exercise prescriptions – high and low load resistance exercise – on swelling, symptoms severity, physical ability, and quality of life in women with BRCL.

The results showed no difference between the high load and low load resistance groups in terms of swelling or severity of symptoms. Both groups saw greater improvements in muscle strength, endurance, and quality of life compared to people who did no training at all. No other adverse events occurred in either group. These findings suggest that women with BRCL can safely lift weights without fear of worsening their symptoms. Many health clubs offer safe, supportive environments for cancer survivors to begin and maintain an exercise regimen.

HIGHER INTENSITY TRAINING LEADS TO FAT LOSS FOR THOSE WITH METABOLIC SYNDROME

People with metabolic syndrome often find themselves struggling to identify what type of exercise is best for a healthy heart. A study in the latest issue of the *International Journal of Cardiology* analyzed the

effect of various levels of physical activity intensity on body fat and heart disease risk in people with metabolic syndrome.

Study participants followed a strict diet and exercised 15-20 hours per week at various intensity levels. The highest amount of fat loss was seen in the group who did high intensity resistance and moderate intensity endurance training. In addition, the group who did moderate intensity resistance and high intensity endurance training saw greater fat loss than the group who did moderate resistance and endurance training. Thus higher intensity exercise incorporated into a higher volume exercising routine and a healthful diet can be beneficial in reducing body fat, and thus cardiovascular risk, in people with metabolic syndrome.

WORKPLACE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS THAT WORK



Over the past few years, workplace wellness programs have become increasingly popular, with

many large companies offering incentives and initiatives for employees to be more active, eat better, and quit smoking. Initiatives range from online programs to large, corporate wellness programs offering onsite fitness centers and healthier food options. A review in the *American Journal of Health Promotion* looked at the current literature to determine the effectiveness of these programs to improve physical activity in the workplace.

The findings showed that programs that included use of pedometers, offered internet-based components, and made changes to both the social and environmental levels (walking groups, for example) were more successful than programs without these characteristics.

This newsletter has been brought to you by your health club, a member of the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association. To learn more about the health benefits of exercise, visit HealthClubs.com today



Health clubs can provide a viable option for companies looking to improve the physical activity, health, and wellbeing of their employees, and some clubs partner with companies to offer wellness programs and services and create a healthier workplace.

SOURCES

Kluge MA, Lecompte M, Ramel L. "Fit and Fabulous": Mixed Methods Research on Processes, Perceptions, and Outcomes of a Year-Long Gym Program With Assisted Living Residents. *J Aging Phys Act.* 2013 May 20.

Oh S, Tanaka K, Warabi E, Shoda J. Exercise Reduces Inflammation and Oxidative Stress in Obesity-Related Liver Diseases. *Med Sci Sports Exerc.* 2013 May 21.

Cormie P, Pumpa K, Galvão DA, Turner E, Spry N, Saunders C, Zissiadis Y, Newton RU. Is it safe and efficacious for women with lymphedema secondary to breast cancer to lift heavy weights during exercise: a randomised controlled trial. *J Cancer Surviv.* 2013 Apr 20. *Arch Phys Med Rehabil.* 2013 May 10. pii: S0003-9993(13)00361-4.

Dutheil F, Lac G, Lesourd B, Chapier R, Walther G, Vinet A, Sapin V, Verney J, Ouchchane L, Duclos M, Obert P, Courteix D. Different modalities of exercise to reduce visceral fat mass and cardiovascular risk in metabolic syndrome: the RESOLVE* randomized trial. *Int J Cardiol.* 2013 May 25. pii: S0167-5273(13)00921-2.

To QG, Chen TT, Magnussen CG, To KG. Workplace Physical Activity Interventions: A Systematic Review. *Am J Health Promot.* 2013 Apr 30.