THE EFFECTS OF EXERCISE ON DEPRESSIVE AND ANXIETY SYMPTOMS IN RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND META-ANALYSIS

S.G. Mckenna, M.P. Herrig, A. Donnelly, A. Fraser, L. Comber, N. Kennedy.
1Discipline of Physiotherapy, School of Allied Health; 2Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, University of Limerick; 3Department of Rheumatology, University Hospitals Limerick, Limerick, Ireland

Background: Exercise reduces depressive and anxiety symptoms among the general population, and those with a chronic illness. Elevated depressive and anxiety symptoms are prevalent co-morbidities in Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) therefore, addressing same through exercise may have an important impact on their health related quality of life (HQoL). Evidence does support the effect of exercise on these outcomes however, quantitative synthesis of evidence from randomised controlled trials (RCTs) of exercise effects, on these critically important symptoms in RA, has yet to be conducted.

Objectives: To quantify the overall population effect of exercise on depressive and anxiety symptoms, fatigue, and pain, derived from available RCTs, and to explore the extent to which participant and trial characteristics moderated the mean effect.

Methods: Articles published before September 2017 were located by two independent reviewers using Google Scholar, PsycINFO, PubMed, and Web of Science. Trials included both randomization to exercise and non-exercise control using validated measures of depression and anxiety, assessed at baseline and post-intervention. Hedges’ d effect sizes (95% CI) were computed and random effects models were used for all analyses. Sources of bias were also assessed independently by reviewers using the Cochrane bias assessment tool for RCTs and Newcastle-Ottawa Quality Assessment Scale for non-RCTs.

Results: Seventeen studies were included, with 1214 participants, of which 12 RCTs contributed to the meta-regression analysis. Participants were aged 49±9 years and 83±14% female. Exercise training consisted on average of 3 ±1 weekly sessions, 60±17 min per session, and 11±5 weeks in duration. Interventions were diverse with a mix of aerobic and/or resistance training including, 4 different types of Yoga, 2 dance based and 1 Tai-chi. Mean reported adherence was 87±11%. For depression, 18 of 20 effects (90%) were >0. The mean effect size Δ was 0.20 (0.10–0.31; p<0.001). For anxiety, seven of seven effects (100%) were >0. The mean effect size Δ was 0.50 (0.27–0.74; p<0.001). Seven of 16 effects reduced pain by a mean effect delta of 0.04 (95% CI: –0.14 to 0.21; z=0.41; p=0.69). Seven of 16 effects (45.5%) did not reduce fatigue with a mean effect delta being −0.01 (95% CI: −0.20 to 0.19; z=−0.09; p=0.93). Depressive or anxiety symptoms were not the primary outcome in any of the included trials.

Conclusions: Pharmacologic interventions have improved the management of RA however, research indicates that exercise remains an important part of the overall treatment. This quantitative synthesis of evidence from RCTs of the effects of exercise shows significant small-to-moderate reductions in depressive and anxiety symptoms. It has been reported that the degree of depression and anxiety in people with RA is a preceding sign of physical disability that may appear later in life therefore, aiming to target both through exercise may help to improve HQoL. Future trials should focus on depression and/or anxiety as the primary outcome. Exercise prescription is a core skill for physiotherapists therefore, they should be confident in prescribing exercise to people with RA, who have depression and anxiety, as it significantly reduces their symptoms.

Disclosure of Interest: None declared


EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A PROGRESSIVE RESISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR PATIENTS WITH FIBROMYALGIA: A RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL

M.C. Vassali, A. Jones, J. Natour, R. Silva. Rheumatology, Federal University of São Paulo – UNIFESP, São Paulo, Brazil

Background: Fibromyalgia (FM) is a chronic pain syndrome, not inflammatory, characterized by the presence of diffuse pain and painful points. Commonly, it is linked to other symptoms such as fatigue, sleep disorders, morning stiffness; and psychological disorders such as anxiety and depression. The medical treatment of FM brings benefits in the short term. For long-term benefits it is usually associated with non-medicated treatment, such as patient education, physical conditioning, rehabilitation and psychological therapy. In this study, we used the progressive resistance training, which is muscle strengthening performed through the gradual increase of load during the training period.

Objectives: To evaluate the impact of a global progressive resistance training program on pain, quality of life, functional capacity and muscular strength in patients with fibromyalgia.

Methods: Sixty patients were randomised into two groups: experimental group and control group. Patients in the experimental group underwent a progressive resistance training program, performed twice a week for 12 weeks. The charge intensity was progressively increased from 40% to 80% of 1RM. The following muscle groups were worked: trunk flexors and extensors, elbow flexors and extensors, knee flexors and extensors, hip adductors and adductors and shoulder abductors. In addition to strength training, the experimental group also received a structured education program in one hour class once a week for five weeks. Patients in the control group received the same education program.

Results: After the intervention, significant improvements were observed in the experimental group in comparison with control group over time for the following parameters: pain (p<0.004), FIQ (p<0.021), quality of life (with statistically significant improvement for all the SF-36 domains), functional capacity, assessed by the 6 min walk test (p=0.001), and muscle strength (with statistically significant improvement for all muscle groups trained). The intergroup and intragroup comparisons were showed in table 1.