

Sleep, Sleep Deprivation, and Daytime Activities: A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Effect of Exercise on Sleep

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OBJECTIVES:

The researchers tested the hypothesis that exercise would improve subjective sleep quality and daytime activity in depressed elders. 32 subjects aged 60-84 with a diagnosis of major or minor depression or dysthymia, volunteered to participate in a 10 week study. They were placed in two groups, either participating in a supervised strength training program 3 times per week or in an attention-control group. A combination of sleep quality, depression, and activity scales were used to measure changes.

RESULTS:

Exercise significantly improved all subjective sleep- quality and depression measures. Depression measures were reduced by approximately twice that of controls. Habitual activity was not significantly increased by exercise. Quality of life sub-scales significantly improved.

SUMMARY:

This study clearly demonstrates that strength training provides benefits well beyond the physical changes. Strength training exercise was also effective in improving subjective sleep quality, depression, and quality of life even without significantly changing habitual activity. This study provides additional motivation for encouraging seniors to engage in strength training on a regular basis.

KEISER PIECES USED:

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

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