



Strength Training for the “Over-80” Group

Submitted by Eric Durak, Wellness @ Home Workshops and The Cancer Wellness Company
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For those who don't believe that strength training is good for almost everyone, a recent report in the British Journal of Sports Medicine states that persons over 80 years of age benefit from regular strength training programs.

The report looked at a number of data-bases related to physical activity to accidents such as trips and falls (one of the leading causes of health care costs in the elderly), and found that a low cost home exercise program had the biggest impact on a survey called the Quality of Health Economics Studies instrument. This survey measures a particular tool (in our case exercise), and correlates it to health care savings.

This study is important for two reasons. First – it highlights exercise as a single factor in preventing health care costs in a sub group of seniors (over 80 years of age, which includes more frail and generally weaker persons). Second – it looks at exercise as a health care POLICY tool – and something that health care policy decision makers (AKA – health plans and Medicare) should look at in terms of lowering health care costs for an ever-growing segment of the senior population.

If policy makers – mainly doctors and health insurers, are going to make any headway into simple and effective tools to reduce health care costs, they should start with exercise. It is something that can be performed on almost every person in the US. This includes the very frail and old, para and quadriplegics, and persons with advanced diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

If these persons can engage in a properly prescribed exercise program, then what is stopping these policy makers from making exercise programs more available for seniors.

The results mirror those from thousands of health promotion studies over the past quarter century. It is time that decision makers in the home care environment take a close look at exercise as part of the standard of care in the home care industry. With the mounting evidence to its benefits, it is making more and more economic sense to have exercise as part of the daily activities for home care clients.

About the author

Eric Durak is the President of Medical Health and Fitness in Santa Barbara, CA. He is the director of the Wellness @ Home program for home care professionals, and has worked his entire career in clinical exercise and The Cancer Wellness Company. Eric has produced award winning programs for wellness and fitness in diabetes, cancer, bariatrics, arthritis, and renal disease. He may be reached at 805-451-1745. Visit the their websites: www.MedHealthFit.com www.MyWellnessAtHome.com

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