

Reshaping the Path of Mild Cognitive Impairment by Refining Exercise Prescription: Understanding Training Type and Exploring Mechanisms

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Reshaping the Path of Mild Cognitive Impairment by Refining Exercise Prescription: Understanding Training Type and Exploring Mechanisms

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Research Abstract

Developing dementia is one of the greatest fears of aging. In fact, many fear it more than cancer. Unfortunately, it is estimated that the number of individuals with dementia will rapidly increase over the next few decades. Thus, the societal value of identifying and developing

effective intervention strategies against dementia cannot be overstated. Exercise is a promising strategy for dementia prevention. Exercise reduces risk factors for both Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia – the two most common types of dementia. However, there is still insufficient evidence for exercise to be adopted into clinical guidelines. For example, we don't know if one type of exercise training is more beneficial than another; much of the research to date has focused on aerobic training – exercise such as running that increased your heart and lung fitness. However, if we better understand the effects of other types of exercise, such as strength training, then we can better use “exercise as medicine” for dementia prevention. In this proposed study, we will study the effects of different types and combinations of exercise training on cognitive function in older adults who are at increased risk for dementia (i.e., mild cognitive impairment). Older adults with mild cognitive impairment represent an ideal target population for intervention strategies, as the preservation of their cognitive function will likely maintain and prolong their ability to live independently and with quality. Furthermore, we will explore how each exercise type improves cognitive function as such information may lead to new discoveries and therapies. Given the immense health and financial burden imposed by dementia, our proposed study could have major impact in Canada and internationally; the results may positively reshape the path experienced by older adults with mild cognitive impairment.

Further information available at:

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