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HEALTH CONDITION AND PHYSICAL FUNCTION AS PREDICTORS OF ADHERENCE IN LONG-TERM STRENGTH AND BALANCE TRAINING AMONG COMMUNITY-DWELLING OLDER ADULTS

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Objectives:

To examine the maintenance and attendance at strength and balance training (SBT) and determinants of adherence among ≥75-year-old adults.

Methods:

A total of 182 community-dwelling individuals (aged 75–98 years, 71% female) began group-based SBT as part of a population-based intervention study. Training was offered at the gym once a week for 2.3 years. The demographics, as well as the health and physical function, were assessed at baseline. In the analysis, participants were classified based on their adherence level into three groups: low (≤33.3%), moderate (33.4 - 66.5%) and high (≥66.6%) adherers.

Results:

The mean length of training was 19 (*SD* 9) months, and 68% continued participation in SBT for at least two years. The mean training adherence was 55 (*SD* 29)% for all participants and 18, 53 and 82% for low, moderate and high adherers, respectively. High adherence was predicted by the following: female sex; younger age; better cognition; independence in Instrumental Activities of Daily Living; higher knee extension strength; higher walking speed; and better performance on the Berg Balance Scale and Timed Up and Go tests.

Conclusions:

Community-dwelling older adults were able to maintain regular SBT for more than two years, despite hospital admissions, comorbidities and functional impairments. However, poorer health and functional limitations affected the frequency of training. Therefore, additional support and alternative training options are needed to serve the older adults with limiting conditions.