**Repeat Falls Lowered When Seniors Receive Cognitive Training**

**Repeat falls less likely when older adults receive cognitive training, study finds**

Repeat falls are 31% less likely over a 10-year period when older adults receive speed of processing training, a new study has found. These benefits were not apparent among older people at low risk of falling, investigators say.

The study used data from the Advanced Cognitive Training for Independent and Vital Elderly (ACTIVE), a federally funded, randomized controlled trial. More than 2,800 participants aged 65 to 94 years took part in speed of processing, memory or reasoning training, or were assigned to a no-contact control group. The occurrence of subsequent falls were determined at 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10 years after the initial testing.

**Mixed findings**

A total of 35% of participants overall reported falls after baseline. The training appeared to have no significant effects on repeat falls among the full study sample or among the group of participants deemed to be at low risk of falling. But participants at relatively greater risk for future falls who received speed of processing training were much less likely to fall when compared to the control group.

Speed of processing training involves correctly identifying increasingly complex visual information in order to promote fast response to stimuli while building the ability to disregard unimportant stimuli. In the study, reasoning and memory training were not linked to a reduction of falls. There also was no association between falls risk and demographic factors or cognitive status, investigators reported.

Additional intervention

“As we have shown, not everybody benefits in the same way from cognitive training,” study lead Briana Sprague, PhD, of the Regenstrief Institute and the Indiana University School of Medicine said. “However, our findings support the belief that for some individuals, physical-based interventions to reduce falls may be further enhanced by cognitive training.”

Falls account for over 36,000 deaths among adults 65 and older, according to 2020 statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In the same year, emergency departments recorded 3 million visits linked to falls in this age group.

**SOURCE:** McKnights Long Term Care News

<https://www.mcknights.com/news/clinical-news/cognitive-training-helps-reduce-falls-for-those-most-at-risk-study-finds/>

**Impact of the combination of cognitive and balance training on gait, fear and risk of falling and quality of life in seniors with mild cognitive impairment**

**Aim**

To investigate the effect of specific cognitive training with CogniPlus and balance training, affecting cognitive functioning, gait speed, risk and fear of falling, and quality of life in an elderly cohort with mild cognitive impairment.

**Methods**

The research sample was composed of 80 older adults with a mild cognitive deficit (mean age 67.07 years) divided into the experimental group (*n* = 40) and control group (*n* = 40). This was a randomized, controlled trial. The experimental group carried out selected exercises from the CogniPlus program combined with balance training. Patients participated in 20 sessions twice per week in an outpatient clinic. Both groups completed 30 min of balance training daily for 10 weeks. Cognitive functions were evaluated by the Mini-Mental State Examination. The fear of falling was assessed by Falls Efficacy Scale-I. The static and dynamic aspects of balance were assessed by the Tinetti test and functional stretching. Gait speed was assessed by four forms of the Timed Up & Go test. Quality of life was investigated according to Spitzer.

**Results**

The two groups showed significant differences recorded after training in the Mini-Mental State Examination, Up and Go test with dual tasking, balance by Tinetti test and the quality of life in favor of the experimental group (*P* < 0.03–0.0001). There were no significant differences found between the groups in the assessment of fear of falling and other monitored parameters.

**Conclusions**

The combination of selected exercises from the CogniPlus program (<https://www.schuhfried.com/cogniplus/>) with balance training contributed to achieving better results than balance training alone for elderly people with mild cognitive impairment.