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Article on Gerontology

Studies from University of Florida, Institute on Aging describe new findings in gerontology

2007 AUG 21 -- A report, "Efficacy of resistance and task-specific exercise in older adults who modify tasks of everyday life," is newly published data in *Journals of Gerontology Series a*. "The purpose of this study was to determine the efficacy of 10 weeks of resistance (RT), functional (FT), or functional plus resistance (FRT) training in older adults who modify tasks of everyday life and are at risk for subsequent disability. Thirty-two older adults (75.8 ±6.7 years) were tested following a control period and training," scientists in the United States report.

"The primary outcome of the study was the number of task modifications and timed performance on eight tasks of daily life. Secondary outcomes included knee and elbow strength (extension and flexion), body composition, self-reported physical function, single-leg balance time, walking speed, and time to vacuum a carpet. The RT group performed progressive intensity training, and the FT group performed task-specific exercises 2 days per week. The FRT group performed 1 day of each training type. No changes occurred in the control period. All three training groups reduced the need to modify tasks of everyday life (RT: 21%, FRT: 26%, and FT: 28%) and improved self-rated function and time to vacuum a carpet. Individuals who performed FT either 1 or 2 days per week also reduced their timed performance (RT: 2.5% [p=0.48], FRT: 18.5%, and FT: 23%). Strength gains were primarily found in groups that performed RT either 1 or 2 days per week (RT and FRT). No significant changes occurred in walking speed, single-leg balance, or body composition. The benefits of exercise are dependent on tasks performed during training," wrote T. Manini and colleagues, University of Florida, Institute on Aging.

The researchers concluded: "Exercise recommendations for low-functioning older adults should reflect task-specific exercise to prevent the onset of disability."

Manini and colleagues published their study in the *Journals of Gerontology Series a* (Efficacy of resistance and task-specific exercise in older adults who modify tasks of everyday life. *Journals of Gerontology Series a*, 2007;62(6):616-23).

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The publisher's contact information for the *Journals of Gerontology Series a* is: Gerontological Society American, 1275 K Street NW Suite 350, Washington, DC 20005-4006, USA.

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