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Research Focus: Benefits of Strength Training in Aging Population

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Abstract

The aging process is an inevitable state of physiological and functional decline that every human being experiences at a certain point of their life. With the life expectancy projected to increase beyond 80 by 2030 and the retirement age gradually increasing from 66 to 67 in the U.S. the need for effective consistent physical activity for people over the age of 50 is at a critical level. Moreover, morbidity compression is a growing concept in the health community, which explains the concept of shortening the length of onset of chronic disease or any form of disability in the last two decades of the average lifespan. We would like to argue that the quality of life can be positively influenced through physical activity, more specifically strength training. Strength training is a significant contributor to longevity alongside experiencing a greater well being during the last decades of life. Furthermore, an active lifestyle can boost energy levels, maintain independence, and it is ultimately beneficial towards cognitive efficacy. For example, strength training can delay the onset of osteoporosis by stimulating bone formation and increasing bone density. Building strength and stamina prevents loss of bone mass and improves balance which can reduce the risk of falling. When incorporating the notion of morbidity compression with physical exercise, its beneficial effects on the geriatric population can result in a decrease in healthcare costs, provide a higher quality of life, and a better functioning age group. Although aging till death is imminent, there are active measures that can be taken to enhance the population's later years of living.

Keywords: Morbidity Compression, Strength Training, Lifestyle