

## **Knowledge about physical activity among older adults: Short term effects of a neighbourhood environment internet-based intervention**

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### **Purpose**

Despite the numerous health benefits, population physical activity levels are low and decline with age. Few studies exposed that a better knowledge about physical activity could encourage people to become physically active, which constitute a critical health challenge for older people. Moreover, neighbourhood environment internet-based interventions are recommended to promote physical activity. Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to explore the effects of a neighbourhood environment internet-based intervention on knowledge about physical activity among older adults.

### **Methods**

At baseline, 87 older adults ( $60.69 \pm 7.85$  years) from the same district were assigned to an intervention ( $n = 41$ ) or a control ( $n = 46$ ) group. The two months intervention was composed of a comprehensive physical activity promotion website, with an emphasis on neighbourhood environment contents, and a monthly personalized email based on the stage of change theory. Physical activity knowledge was assessed by questionnaires at baseline, after one and two month of the intervention, and after one month follow-up.

### **Results**

After the intervention, knowledge of the physical activity recommendations significantly improved in the intervention group ( $p = 0.032$ ), while the control group remained unchanged. Besides, knowledge about environmental opportunities for physical activity increased slightly only in the intervention group.

### **Conclusions**

These findings suggest that a neighbourhood environment internet-based intervention can result in modest improvements of the physical activity knowledge in older adults. Further research should focus on alternative ways to improve the knowledge about local opportunities for physical activity and its relationship with long term effects on behaviour change.

### **Keywords**

Physical activity; internet-based intervention; older adults; knowledge.

### **References**

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