Physical activity among older adults: Short term effects of a neighbourhood environment Internet-based intervention

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**Background**

- Seniors are the most growing age group and generate the highest health care costs.
- As people age, PA offers great opportunities to increase active and independent life expectancies.
- Web-based interventions to promote PA exposed promising effects, even with older adults.
- Environmentally tailored PA websites result in extra intervention effect on PA behaviors.
- Older adults are the fastest growing group of Internet users and use it for health-related subjects.

**Aim**

Explore the effects of a neighbourhood environment Internet-based intervention on PA behaviours of older adults.

**Methods**

- **First group (n=46)**
  - Control
  - Intervention
  - Follow-up

- **Second group (n=41)**
  - Control
  - Intervention
  - Follow-up

**Intervention : Environmentally PA website + tailored emails**

- **Aim**
  - Explore the effects of a neighbourhood environment Internet-based intervention on PA behaviours of older adults

**Results**

- **PA stage of change**
  - Significant increase during intervention in both groups (p=0.003 & p=0.0025)
  - Improvements remains significant after 1 month follow-up in both groups (p=0.012 & p=0.039)

- **PA level (MET-min/week)**
  - Significant increase during intervention in group 1 (p=0.004)
  - PA level remains stable during intervention while it drops in control condition (p=0.027)

**Conclusions**

- A neighbourhood environment Internet-based intervention can, at short-term, improve physical activity behaviors of older adults.
- Targeting environmental determinants seems a promising approach to inform older adults about their local opportunities for PA.
- An Internet-based intervention could help seniors to stay sufficiently physically active during wintertime.
- Further research is needed to examine the long term effects of Internet-based intervention for older adults.
- Incorporate more social support (e.g., find a sport mate) could help seniors to stay active in a long-term perspective.

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