



PARKINSON'S DISEASE NEWS

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THE EFFECT OF PHYSIOTHERAPY ON PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Cochrane Database Systematic Reviews [2012] 7 : CD002817 (Tomlinson CL, Patel S, Meek C, Clarke CE, Stowe R, Shah L, Sackley CM, Deane KH, Herd CP, Wheatley K, Ives N.)

The role of physiotherapy in Parkinson's Disease aims to maximise functional ability and minimise secondary complications through movement rehabilitation. However, there are many methods of physiotherapy that have been used in Parkinson's Disease with differing effects. An analysis was carried out of all the published studies concerning the use of physiotherapy in Parkinson's Disease. Trials were classified into the following intervention comparisons : general physiotherapy, exercise, treadmill training, cueing, dance and martial arts.

Physiotherapy was found to be beneficial using most methods in the short term (less than three months). The benefit was significant when using the following tests : velocity, step length, two-minute or six-minute walk tests, Timed Up & Go, Functional Reach Test, Berg Balance Scale and clinician-rated UPDRS. However, for some outcomes (velocity, Berg Balance Scale and UPDRS), the differences observed were at, or approaching, what are considered minimally clinically important changes. The review illustrates that a wide range of approaches are employed by physiotherapists to treat Parkinson's Disease. However, there was no evidence of very significant differences in treatment effect between the different types of physiotherapy used.

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