

Video games can be good for your health

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(Medical Xpress) -- Stroke patients once considered too disabled to regain function in their affected limbs are now showing signs of recovery because of a new therapy that utilizes the Nintendo Wii.

Dr. Penelope McNulty, a neurophysiologist at [Neuroscience Research Australia](#), will present new data that shows the [Wii](#) is an effective rehabilitation tool at an international conference of the Society of [Electrophysiology](#) and Kinesiology in Brisbane on 20 July.

Dr. McNulty's data shows that an intensive, two-week training program based on the Wii can result in significant improvements in the way stroke patients are able to use their limbs, even for people that had a stroke many years ago.

“It was previously thought that the movement and function [stroke patients](#) had at the time they left hospital was the only recovery they would make,” says Dr. McNulty.

“But we have worked with people who have had strokes one month to 21 years ago, and excitingly, they all improve,” she added.

There are over 60,000 strokes in Australia each year and there is a crucial need to improve rehabilitation methods because this is the only method known to restore movement in stroke-affected limbs.

“The Wii is inexpensive, easy to use and, very importantly, fun. This type of rehabilitation motivates participants to actually complete their therapy, which is essential for maximum recovery,” Dr. McNulty says.

“Everyone notices improvements not just using the Wii, but in activities they do every day, such as opening a door or using a fork,” Dr. McNulty concluded.

Provided by Neuroscience Research Australia

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