

# New UK-wide clinical trial aims to improve muscle strength in older people

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A UK-wide clinical trial is set to examine whether a commonly used heart pill and a food supplement could improve the health of older people across the UK by improving muscle strength.

Researchers at the University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, and Imperial College London are testing whether the treatments can prevent the weakening of muscles that commonly affects older people.

The research team aims to recruit 450 people aged 70 and over from across the UK. Participants will be given a heart pill (perindopril) or a matching dummy tablet, and also a [food supplement](#) powder (leucine) or matching dummy powder.

All the participants will take part for a year, and the research team will test how [muscle](#) strength, muscle size, daily function and quality of life change over the year.

"Muscle weakness, which we call sarcopenia, is really common as we get older, and I see many patients in my work as a geriatrician who are affected by this problem" said Dr Miles Witham, lead researcher for the study at the University of Dundee.

"Older people with weak muscles find it much harder to get around, or to climb stairs, and are more prone to falling and injuring themselves. In the long term people with weaker muscles are more likely to need help to look after themselves. So keeping muscles working well is important in keeping older people active and independent.

"Although we know exercise helps to improve muscle strength even in very old people, it's important to find new ways to keep muscles working well in older people – and to help improve strength when muscles are weak.

"That's why we are excited to be running this new trial. Previous research has suggested that both perindopril and leucine might improve [muscle strength](#), and both these treatments have been used safely in older people for many years. It is only by doing this big trial that we will really know if these treatments are going to benefit [older people](#) though."

Provided by University of Aberdeen

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