

# Resistance training and exercise motivation go hand-in-hand

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Credit: University of Jyväskylä

A recent study conducted in the University of Jyväskylä suggests that resistance training improves exercise motivation and contributes to making exercise planning among older adults. Exercise motivation and exercise self-efficacy are key factors in continuing resistance training.

Resistance training can maintain and increase muscle strength and functional capacity when aging and it is recommended for older adults at least twice a week. However, only a few meet these recommendations. Sedentary lifestyle has unfavorable associations also with psychological functioning and mental health.

The study investigated the effects of a nine-month supervised resistance training [intervention](#) on [exercise](#) motivation, exercise planning and exercise self-efficacy. In addition, it was examined whether these factors predict the continuation of resistance training for the next year following the intervention. The study involved 104 healthy 65 to 75 year olds who did not meet physical activity guidelines for endurance exercise at baseline and did not have previous resistance training

experience.

"Nine months of regular resistance training increased the [intrinsic motivation](#) for both training and physical activity in general: the subjects started to enjoy exercising. Additionally, exercise planning increased, indicating that the subjects started to think about how to start and maintain a physically active lifestyle," says Tiia Kekäläinen, Ph.D. student, from the University of Jyväskylä.

After completing the supervised resistance training intervention, nearly half of the participants (46 percent) continued resistance training independently. Approximately half of them participated in resistance training on average once-a-week during the following year and the other half twice-a-week. Participants who increased their intrinsic motivation for exercise and exercise self-efficacy during the intervention were more likely to continue resistance training twice-a-week.

"The results suggest that finding intrinsic [motivation](#) for exercise and increasing confidence to maintain a physically active lifestyle contribute to continuing [resistance training](#) independently. These factors should be taken into account in exercise interventions and exercise in general to promote continuance of behavior," Kekäläinen says.

**More information:** T. Kekäläinen et al. Motivational characteristics and resistance training in older adults: A randomized controlled trial and 1-year follow-up, *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/sms.13236](#)

Provided by University of Jyväskylä

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