



Active Homes was a study looking to determine the impact of a home-based introductory strength-training visit. The study aimed at increasing positive thoughts and feelings about strength-training activities, as well as strength-training behaviour itself, among adults with SCI.

Summary

- Doing an in-home exercise programs seems to give people more motivation to do strength-training exercise, and
- There seemed to be an increase in the amount of strength-training exercises they did.
- A home visit with an exercise professional and someone with SCI may help people with SCI begin and stick with strength-training exercise.

Possible applications

- For people with SCI, these results show that:
 - o Strength-training exercise does not need to be done in a gym setting to show results and have a positive impact, and
 - o Learning strength-training exercise with an exercise professional and someone else with SCI may help in maintaining an exercise routine.

Research abstract

In a recent study, only one third of Canadians with spinal cord injury (SCI) reported regular strength training activity. Barriers to physical activity, such as lack of resources, knowledge, confidence and accessible facilities, often impede regular physical activity participation for people with SCI. Theory posits that targeting increases in self-efficacy (self-confidence for a particular task) help in overcoming barriers to physical activity. Four sources of self-efficacy are mastery experience (personal experience), vicarious experience (watching similar others), social persuasion (influenced by others), and physiological factors. Thus, the objective of this theory-based pilot study was to examine the effectiveness of peer-mediated, home-based introductory strength training for people with SCI. A fitness professional and a peer with SCI visited the homes of 11 people with paraplegia, not currently involved in strength training (54.5% women). The visit targeted sources of self-efficacy while introducing participants to strength training and a personal training plan, with resources. It was hypothesized that after this Active Homes Visit, participants would have increased self-efficacy, intentions, planning and strength training

behaviour. Task and self-regulatory self-efficacies, intentions, planning and moderate-heavy strength-training behavior were assessed one week before, and two and four weeks following the visit. Separate paired *t*-tests indicated that over time, intentions ($p<.05$), planning ($p<.05$) and strength-training ($p<.10$) increased, but self-efficacies did not. Based on the results from this pilot study, a single, peer-mediated, home-based visit holds promise for promoting strength training behaviour among people with SCI.

An SCI Action Canada Initiative.