

Publication

Zumba dancing and aerobic exercise can improve working memory, motor function, and depressive symptoms in female patients with Fibromyalgia

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Patients suffering from the Fibromyalgia (FM) have impaired cognitive function, reduced physical activity and more marked depressive symptoms. While physical activity and exercise therapy are not typically part of the standard treatment for this syndrome, there is mounting evidence that regular participation in activities involving physical exertion has a positive impact on psychological functioning in people with FM. This study compares the impact of two different interventions, aerobic exercise training and Zumba dancing, on working memory, motor function and depressive symptoms among female patients with FM. The design also included a control condition.; A total of sixty middle-aged female patients with FM (mean age: 35.76 years) and undergoing standard care took part in the study. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the following three conditions: aerobic exercise training, Zumba dancing, or control. At baseline and 12 weeks later after the end of the intervention, participants' working memory, motor function and depressive symptom severity were assessed.; Working memory, motor function and depressive symptoms improved over time, but only in the aerobic exercise training and Zumba dancing conditions than in the control condition. Post-hoc analyses showed that improvements were greatest among participants assigned to Zumba dancing, followed by participants who engaged in aerobic exercise training; the scores of the control group remained virtually unchanged.; Aerobic exercise training and Zumba dancing can be recommended as add-ons to standard care to improve working memory and to reduce severity of depressive symptoms among female patients with FM. Although motor function improved in both intervention groups, the effects did not reach clinical relevance.

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