

Experiences of HD patients who participated in a challenging briskwalking program

Jessie van der Bent¹, Annik Zeilstra¹, Anne-Wil Heemskerk¹, Wilco Achterberg^{1,2}

1. Huntington Centre Topaz Overduin, Katwijk, The Netherlands

2. Department of Public Health and Primary Care, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, The Netherlands

Background

In 2010 TOPAZ Huntington Centre Overduin introduced a weekly Brisk-walking program. The intervention that was developed, was a one hour program based on endurance, balance (static and dynamic) and muscle strengthening. 16 out of 17 HD-patients who participated in this program, filled in a questionnaire to find out what were the personal benefits of this program. Of these participants 10 were male and 6 were female.

Aim

To examine on which of thirteen quality of life aspects the patients experienced benefits and to find out whether this program improves the quality of life. Another aim was to investigate whether patients would execute this activity independently on their own.

Results

Participants (mean estimated TFC-score of **8.25**) experienced the most benefit on the aspects endurance, muscle strengthening, mood, coordination and pleasure. Less benefit was experienced on memory, sleeping and stool. Most patients (**75%**) would not continue a similar program on their own.



"My mood has improved"

"Nice to talk to fellow patients"

"I don't like walking alone"

"I learn from my companions how to arrange HD issues"

aspects experienced in percentages	not (so) positive	neutral	(very) positive
endurance	0	6	94
muscle strenght	0	12	88
mood	0	12	88
coordination	0	12	88
pleasure	0	6	87
concentration	0	18	82
power	0	18	82
self confidence	0	12	81
contact with HD patients	0	12	75
flexibility	0	25	75
memory	0	38	56
bowel movements	0	44	50
sleeping	6	44	44

"I always was tired all day long, now I'm much fitter"

"I have more confidence in my own abilities"

"When camping, my mom noticed, that I'm much more flexible"

Conclusion

This brisk walking program has a positive influence on the quality of life of these HD patients. Especially the aspects endurance, muscle strength, mood, coordination and pleasure contribute to this improvement.

