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Effects of a Novel Dance Exercise on the Fatigue Level, Physical Fitness and Functional Performance in Prostate Cancer Survivors

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Introduction

According to the latest Hong Kong Cancer Registry in 2014, prostate cancer was the third most common cause of cancer in the Hong Kong male population. In view of the prevalence and slowly progressive nature of prostate cancer, it is of paramount importance for this group of cancer survivor to develop regular exercise habit for maintaining and enhancing functional status. However, a well-established exercise regime for those survivors is not yet available.

Objectives

1. To design a novel dance exercise regime which is suitable for prostate cancer survivors
2. To investigate the effects of the specifically designed exercise program on the fatigue level, physical fitness and functional performance in prostate cancer survivors

Methodology

With the coordination of nurse consultant (urology) in subjects' screening and recruitment by convenience sampling, a series of 2-month exercise program (8 session, 45 minutes/session, 1 session/week) were implemented between Sep 2015 to Oct 2016 under the supervision of physiotherapist. The dance exercise regime was developed by physiotherapists tailor-made for prostate cancer survivor with the following components: Warm up, stretching, aerobic, strengthening, core stabilization, pelvic floor training and cool down. Exercise sheet and video were provided to ensure better home exercise compliance. Outcome measures include the following: Fatigue level (charted in Numeric Rating Scale), physical fitness (blood pressure, heart rate, hand grip strength and functional reach test), functional performance (sit to stand test), quality of Life (Personal Well-being Index) and urinary incontinence status (Chinese version of ICIQ). A pretest-posttest design was employed and data was analyzed using paired t-test.

Result

15 male subjects (age range: 63-76, mean age: 70 ± 3.85) were recruited for the study, with a drop-out rate of 13.3% (two subjects). The mean number of sessions each subject attended was 6.5 sessions. No adverse event was reported during the period of study. Improving trends were observed in all outcome measures except heart rate, although results were not statistically significant. Results from this pilot program were encouraging. This specifically designed exercise program was shown to be feasible and may potentially benefit the prostate cancer survivors. However, longer training period, perhaps 3 months (12 sessions) or even longer, may be required to attain significant results. Moreover, monitoring of home exercise compliance is suggested. (Clinical Trials Registry: CUHK_CCT00473).