



Circuit class therapy improves mobility after stroke

Clinical question

How effective is circuit class therapy for improving mobility in adults with stroke?

Bottom line

Circuit class therapy was more effective in improving people's ability to walk further, longer or faster and to balance more easily and confidently when compared with other types of exercise. Circuit class therapy can be implemented in the post-acute and chronic stages for people with moderate stroke severity. Intensity can vary from daily to three times weekly for four weeks or more to achieve benefits. There is evidence it can reduce length of stay in the inpatient setting. There were no increased risks of falling related to participating in circuit classes.

Caveat

While evidence is strong for the effectiveness of circuit class therapy for improving mobility in people later after stroke who are able to walk independently, the evidence for circuit class therapy for people early after stroke is less clear.

Context

Stroke is a major cause of increased dependence for survivors in many activities of daily life, including the ability to walk and negotiate usual environments. Circuit class therapy offers a supervised group forum for people after stroke to practise tasks, enabling increased practice time, without increasing staffing.

Cochrane Systematic Review

English C and Hillier SL. Circuit class therapy for improving mobility after stroke. Cochrane Reviews, 2010, Issue 7. Article No. CD007513. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD007513.pub2.

This review contains 6 studies involving 292 participants.

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