



*Aging & Chronic Diseases*

## **Promoting physical activity in older people**

How can we get elderly to be more physically active and mobile?

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Physical inactivity and falling are major public health issues for older people.

A recent randomised trial investigated the impact of a combined physical activity and fall prevention intervention on physical activity and mobility-related goal attainment among people 60 years and over.

131 community-dwelling older adults were randomised into the trial. The participants had a mean age of 71 years and a quarter of them had fallen in the past year.

At the start of the trial, all participants nominated 2 goals they had related to their mobility. Examples of mobility-related goals were: "Walk for 1hr, 2 times/ week"; "Improve strength by attending exercise class, once a week, "Improve balance by attending Tai Chi class 1 time/ week".

Half of the participants received the experimental intervention, which combined a physiotherapist visit, fortnightly telephone-based health coaching, a pedometer, tailored fall prevention advice, and a fall prevention brochure. The control group received the fall prevention brochure only.

Those included in the experimental group were significantly more likely to achieve their nominated mobility goals at 6 months compared with controls.

This effect did not persist when it was re-tested a year after the intervention period ended. Nevertheless, the intervention could be used to promote greater mobility in older people living in the community.

Want to read deeper into this topic? Have a look at the free full text version of this article published in [Journal of Physiotherapy!](#)



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