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Effects of 16-weeks of Pilates on functional autonomy and life satisfaction among elderly women

RANDOMIZED CLINICAL TRIAL

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the effects of Pilates-based mat exercises on functional autonomy and life satisfaction among elderly women. A randomized controlled trial was conducted in Caxias do Sul, Brazil in 2015, in which 61 healthy older women were randomized into two groups (experimental group, EG = 31 participants with 64.25 mean years of age, SD = 0.14, and a control group, CG = 30 participants, 63.75 mean years of age; SD = 0.08). The EG participants performed the mat Pilates twice per week, 60-minutes per session. The same measurements were performed at baseline and after 16 weeks. No significant differences were found between groups at baseline ($p > 0.05$). In the EG, the following factors were increased after the 16-weeks training period: flexibility of lower limbs, flexibility of upper limbs, strength in lower and upper limbs, aerobic endurance and dynamic balance. This study revealed significant improvements on the life satisfaction scale's score for the EG when compared to the CG, after 16 weeks of intervention. No differences were found between baseline and after 16 weeks on the functional autonomy and life satisfaction scores for the CG. According to the results of this study, it was found that functional autonomy and life satisfaction for elderly women was improved after exposure to 16 weeks of the PM, suggesting this practice helps with healthy aging.

Keywords: Pilates method, functional autonomy, life satisfaction, elderly.

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