



## *Increasing Physical Activity for those Already Active*

### *Purpose*

To determine whether providing strategies for already active people with SCI would increase the amount of physical activity they do in their spare time.

### *Summary*

- Participants who were already participating in a structured exercise program 2-3 times per week attended group sessions where a “toolbox” of strategies such as planning and self-monitoring, were taught
- There was a significant increase in the amount of time participants spent being physically active in their spare time, that is outside of the structured exercise program

### *Possible Applications*

- By using a group-based skill development approach, it is possible for active people with SCI to move beyond the minimum physical activity recommendations for this population

### *Research Abstract*

Developing physical activity interventions for adults with spinal cord injury. Part 3: A pilot feasibility study of an intervention to increase self-managed physical activity

**Objective:** The purpose of this pilot study was to test the efficacy and feasibility of a group-mediated cognitive-behavioral training (GMCB) intervention for increasing self-managed leisure time physical activity (LTPA) among people with spinal cord injury (SCI) who are already somewhat active.

**Methods:** Participants were 13 members of a supervised exercise program for adults with SCI. They took part in a 9-week, evidence-based, theoretically framed, GMCB intervention designed to promote self-regulatory skills and to increase the amount of time spent on self-managed LTPA, outside of the supervised program. Minutes/week of self-managed and supervised LTPA were measured pre- and postintervention, along with measures of social-cognitive variables. Participants' and the interventionist's perceptions of the intervention were also assessed.

**Results:** Participants nearly doubled their total min/week of LTPA, as the result of a significant increase in self-managed LTPA from baseline ( $M=42.00 \pm 69.57$  min/week) to postintervention ( $M= 197.50 \pm 270.86$  min/week;  $p < .05$ ), at no cost

to supervised LTPA. Consistent with the GMCB and counseling of self-regulatory skills, self-regulatory efficacy was sustained and action planning increased from pre- ( $M = 4.63 \pm 3.25$ ) to postintervention ( $M = 6.83 \pm 2.40$ ;  $p = .06$ ). The intervention materials and protocol were perceived as usable by interventionists and participants and had good intervention fidelity.

**Conclusions:** Persons with SCI can voluntarily increase their *self-managed* LTPA after learning and practicing self-regulatory skills. GMCB training interventions are a feasible approach for teaching these skills.

### **Impact**

- This pilot feasibility intervention study is the first to demonstrate that, when exposed to a group-mediated cognitive-behavioral (GMCB) intervention, people with spinal cord injury (SCI) who are already somewhat active (i.e., “actors”) can be motivated to increase their self-managed leisure-time physical activity substantially, without adverse effect.
- The study confirms that an leisure time physical activity (LTPA)- enhancing GMCB intervention for actors with SCI is feasible to conduct, has intervention materials and protocol that are perceived as usable by interventionists and participants, and has good intervention fidelity.
- This pilot GMCB intervention is cautiously suggested as a potentially effective means of sustaining and increasing key self-regulatory cognitions in the Health Action Process Approach (HAPA) model thought to influence behavior change.

Brawley LR, Arbour-Nicitopoulos KP, Martin Ginis KA. (in press). Developing physical activity interventions for adults with spinal cord injury. Part 3: A pilot feasibility study of an intervention to increase self-managed physical activity. *Rehabilitation Psychology*.