

EnhanceFitness

Originally known as Lifetime Fitness, EnhanceFitness is an exercise program that combines cardiovascular, stretching, and balance exercises and strength training. It was developed by researchers at the University of Washington to prevent functional decline in older adults. Classes are dynamic and interactive and are offered on an ongoing basis. Instructors lead participants through a series of stretches, low-impact aerobics, and strength training activities (using soft ankle and wrist weights) that can be adapted to participants' fitness levels. Participants are encouraged to provide peer support.

Selected References

Wallace JI, Buchner DM, Grothaus L, Leveille S, Tyll L, LaCroix AZ, Wagner EH. Implementation and effectiveness of a community-based health promotion program for older adults. *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences*. 1998;53(4):M301–M306. PMID: 18314570.

Ackermann RT, Cheadle A, Sandhu N, Madsen L, Wagner EH, LoGerfo JP. Community exercise program use and changes in healthcare costs for older adults. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. 2003;25(3):232–237. PMID: 14507530.

Belza B, Shumway-Cook A, Phelan EA, Williams B, Snyder SJ. The effects of a community-based exercise program on function and health in older adults: the EnhanceFitness program. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*. 2006; 25(4):291–306.

Ackermann RT, Williams B, Nguyen HQ, Berke EM, Maciejewski ML, LoGerfo JP. Healthcare cost differences with participation in a community-based group physical activity benefit for Medicare managed care health plan members. *Journal of the American Geriatric Society*. 2008;56(8):1459–1465. PMID: 18637982.

Selected Studies at a Glance

Author, Year	Design	Participants	Outcomes
Wallace JI, Buchner DM, Grothaus L, et al. (1998)	6-month RCT	100 older adults	Improved physical functioning ↓ depression 85% program completion rate at 6 months
Ackermann RT, Cheadle A, Sandhu N, et al. (2003)	Retrospective matched cohort study Compared estimated healthcare costs and utilization rates of Lifetime Fitness Program participants vs. controls	1,114 program participants aged 65 or older 3 randomly selected matched controls per participant	Adjusted total health care costs for participants were 94.1% of control costs For participants attending > 1 class per week, total adjusted follow-up costs were 79.3% of controls
Belza B, Shumway-Cook A, Phelan EA, et al. (2006)	Outcomes testing of program participants at 4 and 8 months	Older adults enrolled in program	Outcomes sustained at 8 months: ↑ strength, functional mobility ↑ self-rated health
Ackermann RT, Williams B, Nguyen HQ, et al. (2008)	Retrospective cohort study Compared estimated healthcare costs and utilization rates of EnhanceFitness participants vs. controls Outcomes assessed at 1 and 2 years	1,188 older adult participants Matched group of controls	No difference in health care costs in Year 1 Year 2 outcomes: ↓ adjusted total health care costs for participants ↓ in-patient costs for participants