



Treadmill training can improve gait in Parkinson's disease

Clinical question

How effective is treadmill training in improving the gait function of patients with Parkinson's disease (PD)?

Bottom line

Treadmill training did improve gait speed, stride length and walking distance; cadence did not improve. Acceptability of treadmill training for study participants was good and adverse events were rare.

Caveat

This review was based on a limited number of small trials, the largest involving only 54 patients. The results must be interpreted with caution because there were variations between the trials in patient characteristics, the duration and amount of training (from one session of about 30 minutes, to 8 weeks) and types of treatment. Additionally, it is not known how long these improvements may last.

Context

The role of treadmill training for people with PD in improving gait parameters is unclear. Gait hypokinesia is typically one of the primary movement disorders associated with PD. It is an important determinant of disability and quality of life for people with mild to moderate PD. Treadmill training uses specialised machines to facilitate gait rehabilitation.

Cochrane Systematic Review

Mehrholz J et al. Treadmill training for patients with Parkinson's disease. Cochrane Reviews 2010, Issue 1. Article No. CD007830. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD007830.pub2.
This review contains 8 studies involving 203 participants.

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