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Increasing physical activity in older adults

Submission date
16/01/2014

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
16/01/2014

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
15/05/2017

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[X] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[_] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[_] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Many older adults are both highly sedentary (i.e. spending considerable amounts of leisure time sitting) and physically inactive (i.e. performing little physical activity). This study will try an intervention that centres on a theory-based leaflet giving recommendations for simple activities that can be done to both increase physical activity and displace or prevent sedentary behaviour. The recommendations are designed to promote habit formation, which theory suggests should bring behavioural gains over the long term.

Who can participate?
Participants aged 60-75 who are sedentary (i.e. spend 6 or more hours sitting per day) and inactive (i.e. do less than 30 cumulative minutes of at-least-moderate physical activity per week), with no physical impairments preventing increases in physical activity.

What does the study involve?
Each participant participates for a 12-week period. Potentially eligible patients are telephoned and asked to confirm their eligibility. They then attend their general practice to provide consent. At this session, participants are fitted with an accelerometer and invited to an initial measurement session at University College London in central London, UK. At the initial session, participants complete measures of sedentary behaviour and physical activity, habit, health and wellbeing. Participants are then randomly allocated to one of two groups. The intervention group receive the intervention leaflet and the control group an existing NHS factsheet outlining government recommendations for physical activity and sedentary behaviour but no information on specific activities to achieve these guidelines. After four weeks, participants are telephoned to arrange an 8-week follow-up measurement session. For the intervention group, this phone call also serve as an opportunity to offer additional motivational support or clarification to participants. At the 8-weeks session, participants complete follow-up measures of physical activity and sedentary behaviour, habit, health, and wellbeing. After 12 weeks, participants complete the same measures as above and are also interviewed about their experiences of the intervention and study procedures. All participants also wear sealed accelerometers (for measurement purposes) for one-week periods before the initial assessment and at 8 and 12 weeks later.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Participants in the intervention group are expected to benefit from increasing and maintaining

their engagement in physical activity, and reducing time spent sitting, both of which are expected to lead to sustainable gains in health, wellbeing and functioning. There may also be gains for those in the control arm, given that they receive a leaflet advising on recommended levels of physical activity, and on reduction of sedentary behaviour. The financial and time burdens associated with attending measurement sessions, completing measures and participating in a study for 12 weeks are at least partly balanced by reimbursing participants' travel expenses (up to £20) incurred in attending each session, and giving them a £10 shopping voucher to thank them for helping us with assessment. Participants are also given a £30 shopping voucher, for the same reason, upon completion of the 12-week follow-up session, conditional upon their attending the 8- and 12-week follow-up sessions and returning the accelerometer. No adverse events are expected for participants. The intervention leaflet has been developed by experts, in collaboration with inactive older adults themselves, so that the activities it recommends are feasible and low risk, and may be performed at low levels of intensity, so as to reduce the potential for harm or injury. The control treatment is an existing NHS factsheet setting out physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines and poses minimal risk.

Where is the study run from?
University College London (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run?
April 2014 to February 2015

Who is funding the study?
Medical Research Council (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Benjamin Gardner
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Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
15919

Study information

Scientific Title
Increasing physical activity in older adults: a randomised controlled pilot trial of a brief, habit-based intervention

Study objectives
The primary aim of the study is to assess the feasibility of our intervention leaflet (designed to reduce sedentary behaviour and increase physical activity) and our study procedures, as a basis for informing sample size calculations and procedures for a future definitive randomised controlled trial.

The secondary aim is to assess changes in sedentary behaviour, physical activity, habits, and health.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
First MREC approval date 03/12/2013, 13/LO/1549

Study design
Randomised; Interventional; Design type: Prevention

Primary study design
Interventional

Study type(s)
Prevention

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Topic: Primary Care Research Network for England, Generic Health Relevance and Cross Cutting Themes; Subtopic: Not Assigned, Generic Health Relevance (all Subtopics); Disease: All Diseases

Interventions
Control treatment: A control group will receive an NHS factsheet setting out government recommendations for physical activity, and (minimising) sedentary behaviour.
'On Your Feet' intervention: This intervention centres on a leaflet offering ten tips for simple behaviours that can be adopted to reduce sitting time and increase physical activity, and increase physical activity habit strength. It also includes 'ticksheets' to allow participants to track their adherence to the tips.
Follow Up Length: 3 month(s); Study Entry : Registration and One or More Randomisations

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

Recruitment and attrition rates; Timepoint(s): Study entry, baseline, 8 weeks, 12 weeks

Key secondary outcome(s))
1. Physical activity; Timepoint(s): Baseline, 8 weeks, 12 weeks
2. Physical activity habit strength; Timepoint(s): Baseline, 8 weeks, 12 weeks
3. Physical health; Timepoint(s): Baseline, 8 weeks, 12 weeks
4. Sedentary behaviour; Timepoint(s): Baseline, 8 weeks, 12 weeks
5. Sedentary behaviour habit strength; Timepoint(s): Baseline, 8 weeks, 12 weeks
6. Wellbeing; Timepoint(s): Baseline, 8 weeks, 12 weeks

Completion date
27/02/2015

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Aged 60-75 years
2. Retired
3. Inactive (<30 consecutive minutes of leisure time physical activity of at least 3 METs per week)
4. Sedentary (>6 total leisure time hours sitting per day)
5. Able to speak and read English
6. Able to provide full informed consent for themselves

Participant type(s)
Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Senior

Sex
All

Key exclusion criteria
1. Reporting a disabling impairment which prevents them from engaging in regular light physical activity
2. Currently participating, or has participated in the previous 3 months, in a physical activity promotion or sedentary behaviour reduction study
3. Unable to provide informed consent due to mental incapacity or active psychotic illness
4. Terminally ill
5. Aged under 60 or over 75 years at time of first contact
6. Insufficient comprehension of English

Date of first enrolment
01/04/2014

Date of final enrolment
27/02/2015

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
University College London
London
United Kingdom
WC1E 6BT

Sponsor information

Organisation
University College London (UK)

ROR
https://ror.org/02jx3x895

Funder(s)

Funder type
Research council

Funder Name
Medical Research Council (UK) - National Prevention Research Initiative; Grant Codes: MR /J000396/1

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Not provided at time of registration

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?

Results article	results	08/05/2017		Yes	No
Protocol article	protocol	20/09/2014		Yes	No
Protocol article	updated protocol	05/08/2015		Yes	No
HRA research summary			28/06/2023	No	No
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes