

Project Title

Effectiveness of a Community-delivered Pneumatic Machine Resistance Training Programme (Gym Tonic) For Older Adults at Neighbourhood Senior Centres – A Randomized Controlled Trial

Project Lead and Members

Project lead: Wee Shiou Liang

Project members: Lee Shuen Yee, Alycia Goh, Ken Tan, Choo Pei Ling, Ong Peck Hoon, Wong Wai Pong

Organisation(s) Involved

Singapore Institute of Technology, PulseSync Pte Ltd

Healthcare Family Group Involved in this Project

Allied Health

Specialty or Discipline (if applicable)

Rehabilitation

Project Period

Start date: Oct 2018

Completed date: Jul 2019

Aims

To evaluate the effects of the 12-week coach-led Gym Tonic pneumatic resistance training programme implemented at three neighbourhood senior centres on muscle strength and physical function of older adults.

Background

See poster appended / below

Methods

See poster appended / below

Results

See poster appended / below

Lessons Learnt

- a) Collaborations with industry and/or community partners are important to evaluate the effectiveness and improve community programs for older adults and ensure that the research work is grounded and relevant.
- b) Communication and coordination with stakeholders are essential for successful project completion, especially for processes such as cleaning and analysis of real-world data.
- c) Beyond small-scale controlled laboratory studies, pneumatic resistance training program (Gym Tonic) increases muscle strength and fast gait speed, and can be effectively scaled-up and delivered in the community.

Conclusion

See poster appended / below

Additional Information

Singapore Health & Biomedical Congress (SHBC) 2021 – Bronze (Category: Singapore Young Investigator Award, Clinical Research)

Project Category

Applied Research, Quantitative Research, Technology, Digital Health, MedTech

Keywords

Gym Tonic, Pneumatic Resistance Programme, Technology-Enabled Pneumatic Machines, Strength Training, Frailty, Retrospective Trial

Name and Email of Project Contact Person(s)

Name: Wee Shiou Liang

Email: shiouliang.wee@singaporetech.edu.sg

Effectiveness of a community-delivered pneumatic resistance training programme (Gym Tonic) for older adults at neighbourhood senior centres – A pragmatic randomized controlled trial



Shuen Yee Lee^a, Alysia Goh^b, Ken Tan^b, Pei Ling Choo^a, Peck Hoon Ong^a, Alan Wai Pong Wong^a, Shiou-Liang Wee^{a,c}

^aHealth and Social Sciences Cluster, Singapore Institute of Technology, ^bPulseSync Pte Ltd,

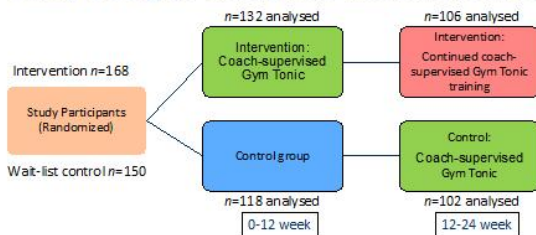
^cGeriatric Education and Research Institute

Background

- Resistance exercise attenuates the age-related loss in muscle mass, strength and function in older adults, which is associated with adverse health outcomes including frailty, falls, dependency and mortality.
- However, the effectiveness of a scaled-up community-delivered resistance training programme, using technology-enabled pneumatic machines, is not known.
- We evaluated the effectiveness of a multi-site community-delivered 12-week pneumatic-resistance programme, Gym Tonic (GT), on muscle strength and physical function in older adults.

Methods

Study Design, Participants and Intervention



Intervention consisted of twice/week progressive resistance training which target major muscle groups, using pneumatic machines (HUR, Korkkola, Finland).

Outcomes

Fried frailty score, lower-extremity muscle strength and physical function (i.e., fast and habitual gait-speed, balance, repeated-chair-sit-to-stand, short physical performance battery (SPPB)), measured at baseline, 12 weeks and 24 weeks.

Statistical analysis

- Participants with completed outcome measures at baseline and 12 weeks were included for analysis according to their randomised group allocation (modified intention-to-treat analysis), and maximum likelihood estimation was used to analyse missing data.
- Between-group differences for outcomes measured from baseline to 12 weeks were analysed using mixed-effect model, adjusted for age, sex and moderate-to-vigorous-physical activity levels.
- One-way ANOVA with Bonferroni adjustment was used for within-group differences in outcome measures from baseline, 12 and 24 weeks.

Results

Participants and adherence

- Programme adherence was high in intervention [0–12-weeks, 90% (SD,13%); 12–24-weeks, 89% (SD,17%)] and control [12–24-weeks, 90% (SD,19%)] groups.
- Frailty score improved by 0.5 in the intervention but not control group ($p=0.004$).

Reference: Lee, S.Y., Goh, A., Tan, K. et al. Effectiveness of a community-delivered pneumatic machine resistance training programme (Gym Tonic) for older adults at neighbourhood senior centres – a randomized controlled trial. *Eur Rev Aging Phys Act* 18, 21 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s11556-021-00273-x>

Muscle strength and Physical Function

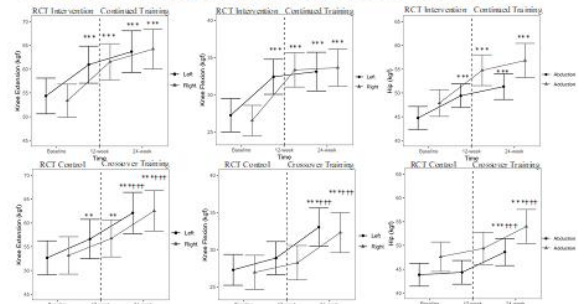


Fig 1. Muscle strength outcomes (mean and 95% CI). ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$ compared to values at baseline; ††† $p<0.001$ compared to values at 12 weeks.

- After 12 weeks, lower-extremity muscle strength and fast gait speed improved by 11–26% and 7% respectively (all $p<0.05$) in GT-intervention group than controls, regardless of frailty status (Fig 1&2).
- Repeated chair sit-to-stand time, balance, habitual gait speed and SPPB score did not differ between intervention and control groups after 12 weeks (Fig 2).

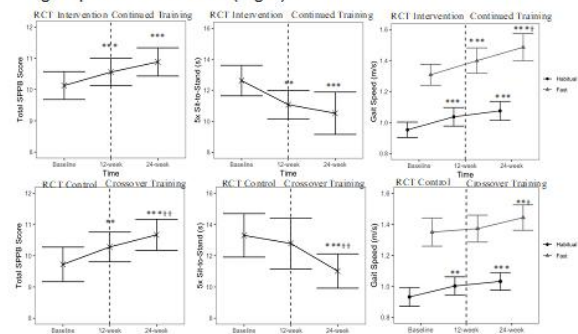


Fig 2. Physical function outcomes (mean and 95% CI). ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$ compared to values at baseline; † $p<0.05$, †† $p<0.01$ compared to values at 12 weeks.

- Within the intervention group, lower-extremity muscle strength and physical function outcomes improved at 24 weeks compared with baseline (all $p<0.001$, Fig 1&2).
- Within controls, lower-extremity muscle strength, SPPB, repeated chair sit-to-stand, and fast gait-speed improved post-GT (24-week) compared to both pre-GT (12-week) and baseline (Fig 1&2)

Conclusion

- Extending upon earlier laboratory studies on the benefits of pneumatic resistance training on muscle strength and function, GT programme has high adherence, can be scaled-up, and be effectively delivered by community providers at neighbourhood senior centres.
- Future studies should investigate whether the addition of other multi-modal function-specific training may complement GT, and achieve better physical function, in other balance, endurance and power-related tasks.

