Zumba® Gold for Patients with Parkinson's Disease

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There is considerable emerging literature which indicates that exercise improves health and wellbeing in patients with Parkinson's disease (PD). Zumba is a new dance and exercise program which has become extremely popular with 6000 classes being taught world-wide on a weekly basis.

Zumba combines aerobic exercise with Latin and international rhythms. Zumba Gold is an adapted product of Zumba developed for individuals with medical needs and disabilities. We describe a series of classes of Zumba Gold which we offered to a group of individuals with mild Parkinson's disease and their partners. Pre-Zumba questionaires were administered to each participant to assess goals of the participants and their prior experience with Zumba or other dance programs.

Patients were asked about the extent to which PD affects their gait and balance. Post-Zumba questionnaires asked about effects of the classes on gait and balance, social recreation, and quality of life. Each series of classes included six sessions. Factors which contributed to the success of the program are reviewed as well as challenges that were faced in designing and launching the program.

Adaptations made by the instructor to accommodate the needs of patients with PD are described. A video is will be presented which contains interviews with the Zumba Gold instructor, the Medical Director of the NPF COE, Zumba participants, and footage from one of the classes. It is hoped that this Zumba program may in the future serve as a model for similar programs elsewhere.

Wii Videogame Balance Board Training: Does it Improve Balance and Gait in Adults with Parkinson Disease

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Summary: The project is A Prospective Interventional Cohort Study whose objective is to assess the effect of exercise training with the Nintendo Wii Fit videogame and balance board system on balance and gait in adults with Parkinson disease.

Conclusion: An 8-week exercise training class using the Wii balance board improved selective measures of balance and gait in adults with PD. However, no significant changes were seen in mood or confidence regarding balance.