essential in this area to tease out of other factor that may be contributing to this relationship and to develop new and innovated modalities for older adults to safely exercise.

IS A LOW INTENSITY WALKING INTERVENTION SUCCESSFUL IN REDUCING DEPRESSION SYMPTOMS IN MIDDLE TO OLDER AGE WOMEN?
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Depression is a common syndrome that has a strong negative impact on people’s quality of life. Women, especially in middle age, are facing a greater risk for depressive disorders. Increasing one’s physical activity level has shown great effects on reducing depression symptoms. The study evaluated the effect of a 12-week goal-directed walking intervention on walking engagement and depression symptoms among middle-aged women. A total of 55 middle to older age female participants (age range: 50–74) were included in the analysis. The 12-week intervention instructed participants to increase 15% of baseline steps every other week. Depression levels were measured pre-and post-intervention by the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Revised Scale (CESD-R). A baseline measure-time structure was considered as a possible mediator of association between walking and depression. Although no intervention effects were found in steps promotion and depression reduction in this walking program, we found that more depressed or younger participants had lower walking consistency. It suggested that people with higher depression level or younger age require more instruction over time when engaging in physical activity interventions. Additionally, adherence of participants showed a over-time decreasing trend in this self-paced walking program. This inspired us to give timelier adjusts goals and exercise performance feedback to bolster participants’ adherence in the future.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND AGING: EXPLORING MOTIVATIONS OF MASTERS SWIMMERS
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Physical activity has many benefits for the optimal health of older adults (e.g., lowering risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, dementia and falls). However, less than one in four Americans meets guidelines for physical activity and evidence suggests inactivity increases with age. A growing number of unhealthy older adults will strain resources. Masters athletes are one segment of the population that some promote as exemplary because of their remarkable physical functioning. Swimming is a global, fast-growing sport in Masters athletics. This qualitative study explored the motivations and barriers of older adult (60+ years of age) members of a Masters swim club in Southern California. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to delve into the lived experiences of the participants, solicited peer feedback and employed Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. Four main themes emerged: Masters swimming provided an enjoyable way to slow physical decline; participants felt camaraderie; working out with a group provided challenge and achievement that reinforced their identity as swimmers; and their practice greatly reduced stress. A formidable barrier was revealed when most of the participants expressed longing and regret that they could not swim due to COVID risk and safety guidelines. These findings can be used to design community programs to promote lifelong physical activity participation.

PILOTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A TEXT MESSAGING AND FITNESS TRACKING INTERVENTION WITHIN OLDER BLACK WOMEN

Physical activity (PA) can help lower risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes, reduce anxiety, and reduce risk of Alzheimer’s and other related dementias. Despite these benefits, older, obese Black women are not meeting CDC recommended PA guidelines at disproportionate rates. This study aims to identify whether a targeted intervention, Texting Older Sisters to Step (T.O.S.S.), can improve health-related outcomes within older Black women. A sample of 24 Black women (12 per group) age 60 and older who had a BMI > 30 were recruited. The treatment group received text messages previously validated to promote physical activity every day for 12-weeks and were placed in Fitbit communities. The control group received a general health or nutrition-related text message every Sunday. Participants ranged from 60 to 70 years of age with a mean of 64 and 90% had at least some college education. Overall, there was a significant reduction of 1.53 inches in waist circumference, p < .01. When the groups were compared, the treatment group showed a 2.15 inch reduction compared to a 0.91 inch reduction in the control group (Cohen’s d=0.54, a medium effect size). Similarly, the treatment group lost 2.50 pounds on average compared to 1.33 in the control group (d=0.23). The two groups who were compared on HgA1c, the treatment group was stable with a reduction of 0.01 unit whereas the control group reduction was 0.15 unit (d=0.23). Findings provide initial support for the T.O.S.S. intervention and suggest a modification of including nutrition information among the intervention messages.

SILVER SNEAKERS IN CENTRAL PA: ASSESSMENT OF A COMMUNITY BASED EXERCISE PROGRAM IN A MIXED RURAL/URBAN CATCHMENT AREA
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