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## **Effectiveness of senior dance on risk factors for falls in older adults: randomised controlled trial**

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**Background.** Older people's participation and adherence to structured exercise programs to prevent falls are still low. Dancing is considered by some older people to be an interesting and joyful activity that provides opportunity for socialization. This randomized controlled trial investigated the effect of a specific type of Dance, Senior Dance, on balance, mobility and cognitive function, compared with a control intervention, among older people living in the community.

**Methods.** This study was approved by the Human Ethics Committee of the São Paulo State University (CAAE 48665215.9.0000.5402). A total of 82 community-dwelling older people aged 60 years or over and cognitively intact were recruited. Participants were allocated into two groups, Senior Dance plus education (intervention group) and education alone (control group). The program of Senior Dance consisted of a 12-week, twice-weekly group-based dance classes. Participants in both groups attended a 1-hour single educational class on strategies to prevent falls. Primary outcome was single-leg stance with eyes closed. Secondary outcomes were timed sit-to-stand test, timed four-meter walk, and cognitive function tests.

**Results.** Of the total of 82 patients randomised, 71 (87%) completed the 12-week follow-up. Single-leg stance with eyes closed (primary outcome) improved in the Senior Dance group (mean difference [MD] = 2.3 seconds, 95% CI: 1.1 to 3.6) compared to the control group at 12-week follow-up. Senior Dance group performed better in the standing balance tests (MD= 3.7 seconds, 95% CI: 0.6 to 6.8), were faster in the sit-to-stand test (MD= - 3.1 seconds, 95% CI: -4.8 to -1.4), and in the four-meter walk test (MD= -0.6 seconds, 95% CI: -1.0 to -0.1). There were no significant differences between groups for cognitive function tests.

**Conclusion.** Senior dance was effective to improve balance and mobility but not cognitive function in older people living in the community.