

The Effect of Electronically Delivered Therapy with Regard to Chronic Low Back Pain (cLBP)

Joel Broeckelman, Austin Foley, Caroline Geisler, Evan Williams, Mary Winship
Faculty: Barbara Smith
Department of Physical Therapy, Wichita State University

INTRODUCTION: Low back pain is a common musculoskeletal condition that affects a vast number of individuals worldwide, causing disability and reduced function. An often-preferred method of treatment for chronic low back pain is physical therapy. Research has shown that Pilates, stabilization/motor control, resistance training, and aerobic exercise training are acceptable modes of physical therapy to reduce low back pain. The surge and persistence of COVID-19 have caused difficulties in providing in-person treatment, thus springing into action electronically delivered therapy

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study was to determine if an electronically delivered physical therapy program would create improvements in pain, disability, and exercise adherence compared to the control group.

METHODS: Eight males and females aged 18 years or older were included and participated in this research, and randomly placed into an exercise group or control group. Subjects in the exercise group performed resistance and core stability exercises and stretches for 8-weeks via emailed instructions, and a virtual home exercise program. Scores on a pain scale, a disability scale, and an adherence scale were recorded before and after the intervention.

RESULTS: Two participants in the intervention group had a decrease in overall pain; one person in the control group also showed reduced pain. No differences were found in disability scale scores between members of the two group. .

CONCLUSION: Due to the small number of participants, it is unclear if this electronically delivered exercise program can reduce low back pain. From this study, improvements in function were not shown. The exercises used were relatively low level with minimal functional carryover. There is a need to assess other forms of telemedicine to reduce low back pain.