Does the Aging Process Influence The Agility Performance In Old People?

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INTRODUCTION

There is an association between agility and some neuromuscular functions such as perception capability and decision making. The aging process tends to reduce physical fitness such as agility performance1. The progressive decline in functional fitness in elderly is related with physical limitations, dependence, lost of confidence and perception capability.

METHODS

• Longitudinal study (32 men and 120 women; 70.9±4.5 years).
• The sample was divided into three groups (group 1: ≤74 years old; group 2: 75-84 years old; group 3: ≥85 years old) to observe if there were differences between ages.
• Agility was measured using 8-foot up and go2 (image 1).
• Test was performed twice; best result was recorded.
• Measurements were registered in 2008-2009 and 8 years later (2016-2017).
• ANOVA (2-way repeated measures) was used to evaluate changes.

RESULTS

• Significant decreases were found in agility between both measures (5.1±1.9 s vs. 6.4±0.9 s; p<0.01).
• Average percentage of change increased 24%.
• The oldest group showed a larger increase in agility in the 8-year follow-up than the younger groups (12%, 23%, 50%, groups 1, 2 and 3, respectively; p<0.001 between youngest and oldest group).

CONCLUSIONS

• Agility has a progressive decline across the aging process. There is a high negative impact in octogenarian (>85 y).
• Agility performance should be included in fitness program in order to increase quality of life in elderly.

REFERENCES


*Image 1. 8 Foot-up and go test.*