DOES SELF-REGULATORY EFFICACY INFLUENCE PERSISTENCE TO BE ACTIVE WHEN CHALLENGED BY AN ARTHRITIS FLARE?

James D. Sessford, MSc
University of Saskatchewan

Student/Trainee

INTRODUCTION / AIM
Physical activity (PA) participation in people with arthritis is recommended but low. Arthritis flares involve elevated symptom barriers and challenge PA. Yet, people higher in self-regulatory efficacy to overcome arthritis barriers (SRE) are more active during flares. One reason may be that higher SRE influences people to persist when challenged. Our objective was to compare participants higher or lower in SRE, exposed to varied vignette-based conditions of flare symptoms, on anticipated persistence to be active. A secondary objective was to examine differences between SRE groups on arthritis pain acceptance.

METHODS
A 2 SRE (high/low) by 2 symptom challenge (high/low) quasi-experimental design was used. Development of flare symptoms descriptions was informed by focus groups and pilot tested. Participants (M age = 64 ± 10.68) had self-reported medically-diagnosed arthritis. Pain intensity, SRE, and pain acceptance were assessed via a paper survey. Then, participants read either a high or low symptom challenge vignette and reported PA persistence.

RESULTS
2 x 2 ANOVA revealed a main effect for SRE (p<.01, partial η2=.18). The high SRE group exposed to high symptoms challenge reported greater PA persistence than those low in SRE. ANCOVA examining SRE group differences in pain acceptance (pain as covariate) was significant (p = .006), with higher SRE individuals reporting greater pain acceptance.

DISCUSSION / CONCLUSIONS
Individuals higher in SRE are confident they can persist with PA despite highly challenging symptoms and exhibit greater levels of pain acceptance.

OTHER AUTHORS
Miranda A. Cary
Parminder K. Flora
Jocelyn Blouin
Lawrence R. Brawley

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Nancy C. Gyurcsik