Tai Chi and Aerobic Exercise for Fibromyalgia: a Mind-Body Study
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Introduction

The Tai Chi and Aerobic Exercise Study at Tufts Medical center is looking to compare how Tai Chi versus Aerobic Exercise on the symptoms of Fibromyalgia (FM). FM is a disorder characterized by widespread musculoskeletal pain accompanied by fatigue, sleep, memory and mood issues. Currently there is no cure known for FM but there are medications available with regular Aerobic Exercise as the standard treatment prescribed. This study aims to look at and compare how a mind-body exercise like Tai- Chi compares to more traditional treatments for FM.

Activity

As a Co-op Student my role was to provide support in different areas of the study to ensure that it ran smoothly which included:

• Conducting follow up phone calls after the completion of intervention
• Facilitating weekly exercise classes during intervention
• Score and enter different data points into data system (ex. FIQR)
• Assist PI in her grant work (insert references and proofread)
• Enter data and conduct prescreen phone calls during evaluations

Outcomes

• Audit participant data from previous study cycles
• Build relationships with current and past study participants through follow up phone calls and intervention classes
• Observed various parts of a clinical trial from evaluations, intervention and data analysis.

Reflection

During my Co-op I:

• Learned how a clinical trial is conducted and the importance of well kept data
• Developed important communication skills with study participants and team members
• Gained knowledge on different aspects of Complimentary Alternative Medicine (CAM) treatments and rheumatological diseases.

Questions Asked on the FIQR:

• “Fibromyalgia prevented me from accomplishing goals for the week.”
• “Indicate how much your fibromyalgia made it difficult to do much of the following activities over the past 7 days: Climb one flight of stairs.”
• Indicate the intensity of your fibromyalgia symptoms over the past 7 days: Please rate your level of balance problems.”

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