

Weight-bearing exercise eases knee osteoarthritis, temporarily

NEW YORK, Oct 5, (RTRS): A therapeutic program of weight-bearing exercise reduces pain and improves joint function, at least for two to six months, for people with osteoarthritis, according to a review of previous

trials. "We had a systematic review for Cochrane from 2008 and 2009, but there were much less articles," said Dr Martin Van der Esch, who coauthored the review. Since then, many more

studies have been published, and confirm the benefits of exercise for arthritis pain, he told Reuters Health by phone.

Osteoarthritis, the breakdown of joint cartilage over time, causes pain,

swelling and reduced motion, usually of the hands, knees, hips or spine. Joint injury, excess weight and older age increase the risk for osteoarthritis, which affects more than 50 million adults in the US, according to the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For the new Cochrane review, Van der Esch, of the Reade Centre for Rehabilitation and Rheumatology in Amsterdam, the Netherlands and col-

leagues analyzed 55 randomized controlled trials comparing a land-based exercise program with no exercise among subjects with osteoarthritis. The trials varied in type, duration and intensity of exercise programs.

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