

Repetitive task training can improve functional ability after stroke

Clinical question	Can repetitive task training after stroke improve functional ability?
Bottom line	In comparison with usual care or placebo groups, repetitive task training resulted in modest improvement in lower limb function, but not upper limb function. These improvements affected walking speed, walking distance and the ability to stand from sitting, but improvements in leg function were not maintained 6 months later. There was also a small amount of improvement in ability to manage activities of daily living.
Caveat	There is no evidence improvements are sustained once training has ended. Training effects were no different for people whether early or late after stroke.
Context	Stroke can cause problems with movement, often down one side of the body. All limbs can be affected and, while some recovery is common over time, about one-third of people will have continuing problems. Only 18% of people regain unrestricted walking ability after stroke.
Cochrane Systematic Review	French B et al. Repetitive task training for improving functional ability after stroke. Cochrane Database of Syst Rev. 2007, Issue 4. Article No: CD006073. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD006073.pub2. Note: This review contains 14 trials involving 659 participants in 8 countries.
PEARLS 105, February 2008, written by Brian R McAvoy	

1. Lord S et al. Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation 2004;85:234–39.

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