

Exercise reduces depressive symptoms in adults with arthritis: Evidential value

George A. Kelley, Kristi S. Kelley

Responses to Reviewer's Comments

For ease of reading, all reviewer comments have been copied below with our responses after each one with our responses in **boldface**.

Responses to Reviewer 1

C1. References are not always in accordance with author's guidelines

R1. References have now been placed in accordance with author's guidelines. See references starting on page 14.

C2. Quality of figure could be optimized.

R2. Figures are now optimized and saved using the tif extension, an industry standard, and then inserted into the Word document. If necessary, the original sources files in tif extension can be sent and edited using a freely available program such as XnView, available at <http://www.xnview.org> Given their specialized nature, it is not possible to send or produce these as decomposable files in Word, Excel or Powerpoint format.

C3. For statistics, refer to an expert.

R3. An expert in biostatistics has seen and approved this. See lines 290-293 as well as File 21472-Biostatistics statement.

Responses to Reviewer 2

C1. Describe clearly whether arthritis develops due to depression or peoples become depressed after having arthritis

R1. We now include a statement saying that people with arthritis become depressed after developing arthritis versus the development of arthritis as a result of being depressed. See lines 101 and 102.

C2. Depressive symptoms from each study were not well described in the materials and method section

R2. We now include a statement saying that depressive symptoms were defined by the authors from each study versus our own definition. See lines 137 and 138.

C3. How about the age range of participants?

R3. As suggested we now include the within-study age range of the participants. Please see lines 219-220.

C4. Need more information on the P-curve in the materials and method section.

R4. As suggested, and while being mindful that (1) this is not a methods paper, (2) we have already provided a rather lengthy description of p-curve, and (3) our concern that we would plagiarize the original authors work, we now provide some additional but brief information, including references to the original methods papers from which this method derives. Please see lines 187-189.

C5. What's the type of arthritis was included in this study.

R5. This information can now be found on lines 138-139 as well as lines 217-218.

C6. The authors may include the sign symptom of arthritis based on which the authors stated that exercise reduces the arthritis.

R6. Actually, we never claimed that exercise reduces arthritis as this was not the purpose of this study. Rather, we stated that exercise reduces depressive symptoms in adults with arthritis. Please see lines 75-76, 243-245 and 285-286.

Responses to Reviewer 3

C1. This is a nice study.

R1. Thank you so much for the positive feedback. It is GREATLY appreciated.

C2. I would be interested in seeing a definition of the term "exercise", in terms of duration, frequency, etc.

R2. As suggested, we now include a definition of exercise along with the average length, frequency and duration of the included studies. Please see lines 139-142 as well as lines 218-219.