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Title: Attendance vs prescription: Exercise attendance rates for people with COPD: Systematic review

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Body: The duration, frequency, mode and intensity of exercise programs for people with COPD are recommended by international consensus statements. The question for this review was: 'How consistently are a priori criterion and attendance rates reported for people with COPD participating in exercise programs?' A systematic search of CINAHL, Medline, Embase and CENTRAL (Cochrane), was undertaken in October 2011. Studies were eligible for inclusion if published in English, included people with COPD, assessed the effects of rehabilitation as the primary intervention (+/- adjunctive strategies) and included at least 2 weeks exercise training (+/- education). There were no limits placed on intervention site (hospital, community, home) or publication date. Data extraction processes were confirmed prospectively for consistency (>80% agreement), with pairs of reviewers extracting data independently and disagreements resolved by consensus. The search returned 752 citations (497 citations excluded from title and abstract) with 255 full text articles retrieved for review. Of the 174 articles reviewed to date, a further 21 citations have been excluded. Of the 153 studies, 100% report the prescribed frequency of training but only 54% provide information on attendance at training sessions (n = 83) and less than a third of these report a priori criteria for attendance (n = 23, 28%). These preliminary analyses suggest that reporting of attendance rates in COPD exercise trials is low, which makes it difficult to calculate dose-response relationships between exercise participation and improvements in health outcomes.

