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Evaluating Exercise Therapy for Managing Breast Cancer-Related Lymphedema: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomised Controlled Trails

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Background: Breast cancer is the most prevalent cancer in South Africa with an incidence rate of 31.4 per 100,000 women, with 57.1% of cases reported at advanced stages (1)(2). Since 2009, numerous international studies have demonstrated the benefits of exercise in managing upper-arm lymphedema(3)(4)(5)(6). The executive committee of lymphology 2016 consensus document stated the need for a satisfactory meta-analysis on treatment methods(7). With a lack of research in Sub-Saharan Africa on the effectiveness of exercise for BCRL patients and survivors, it is necessary to determine whether exercise protocols published on western BCRL rehabilitation strategies will be feasible in South Africa(8)(1). The primary outcome of the study is to conduct a systematic review and meta-analysis on Randomised Controlled Trails studying the use of exercise therapy in managing BCRL.

Aim: The aim of this systematic review and meta-analysis is to examine the effectiveness of exercise interventions of RCT's in treating BCRL .

Methods: A systematic search of RCT's of healthcare databases over the last decade will be conducted. Medical sub-headings and text-based search terms for BCRL and Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT) were adapted from prior peer-reviewed literature. This SR will follow the PRISMA guidelines. COVIDENCE will be used to analyse the data, categorise the data, and create visual patterns. The eligible studies will also be manually inserted into an excel spreadsheet which will include title, type of study, year and results section.

Keywords: "physical activity", "breast cancer-related lymphedema", "BCRL", "exercise interventions"

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Conflict of Interest & Ethical Approval

yes

Abstract submitters declaration

yes

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