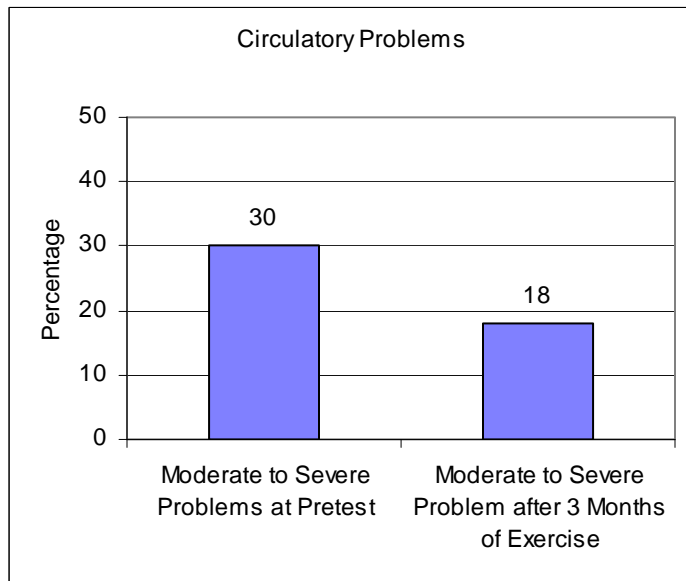




Wellness and Fitness Outcomes 2008

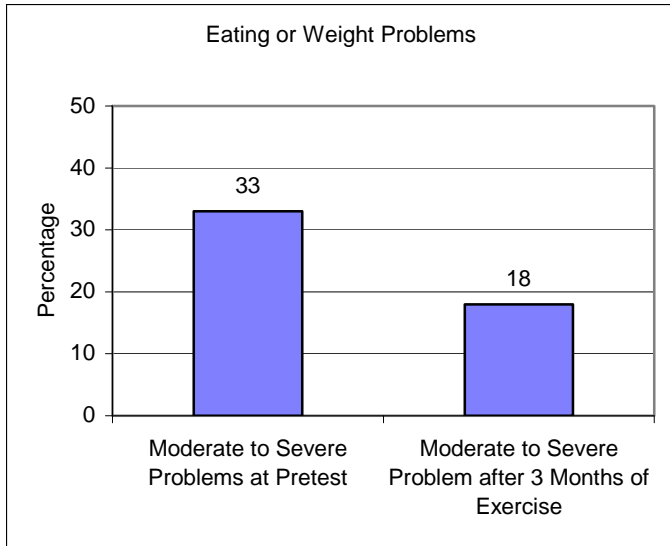
Individuals with disabilities have an increased rate of development of secondary conditions, such as high blood pressure, obesity, and fatigue. Because of this increased rate of development of secondary conditions, this group has been referred to by researchers as having a “thinner margin of health,” meaning that they are more susceptible to these health complications.

In a group of 46 individuals with a wide variety of disabilities who had already been exercising for an average of 6 to 12 months, we saw the following changes over a 3-month period of exercise in the Fitness Center at Courage Center. These individuals ranged in age from 22 to 81, with an average age of 44 years.

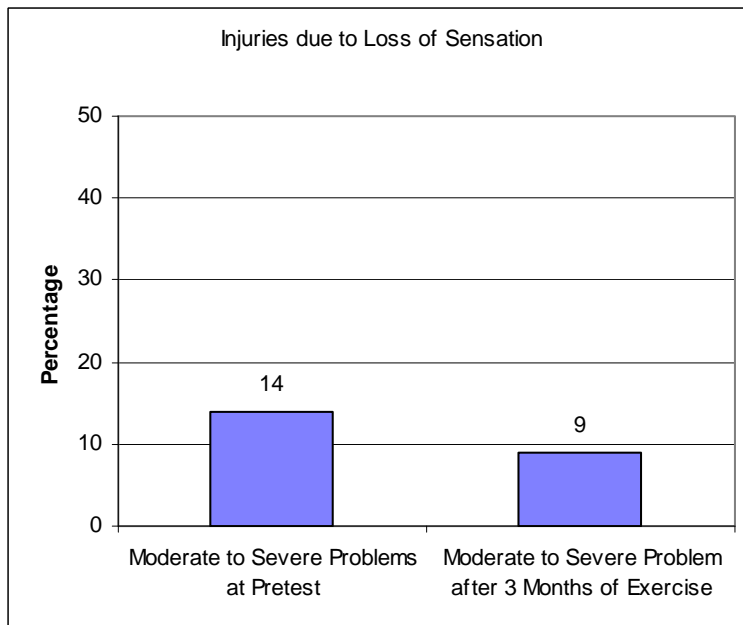


Clients who receive Fitness services at Courage Center saw a 12% decrease in moderate to severe circulatory problems, including problems related to swelling in the legs or in developing blood clots.

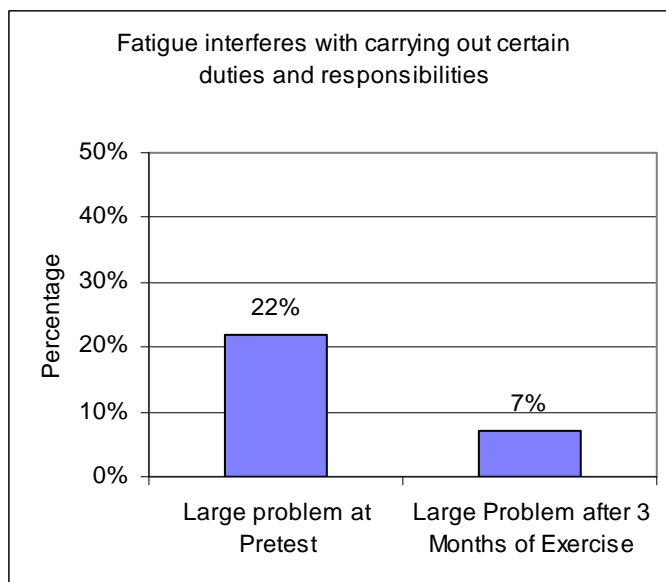
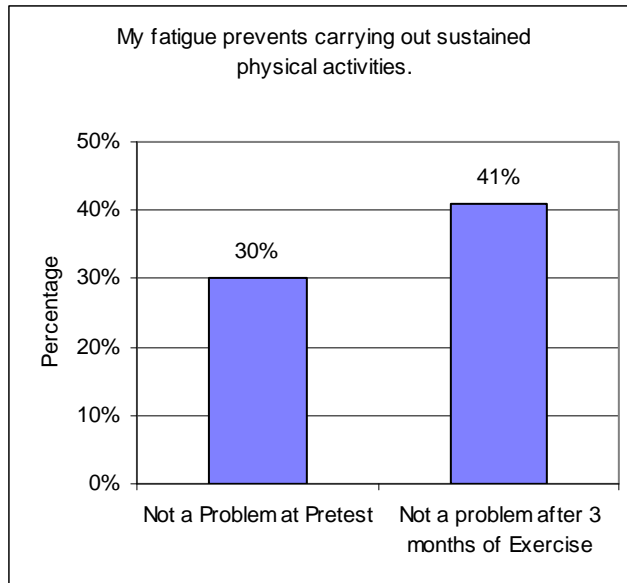
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Problems related to weight control and regulating eating are important because obesity is a common secondary condition for individuals with disabilities, and is related to decreasing independence in transfers and self care and increased problems with blood pressure and diabetes. In our sample, we saw a decrease of 15% in moderate to severe problems in this area.



Decrease in problems due to loss of sensation refers to a decrease in the occurrence of skin problems due to loss of sensation, such as skin breakdown or decubiti. In our sample, we saw a decrease of 5% in moderate to severe problems in this area.



While we did not see a significant change in fatigue severity scores, we did see improvements in some items, including increased ability to carry out sustained physical activities and a decrease in difficulty in carrying out certain duties and responsibilities.

In this outcomes project, we saw an overall trend toward a decrease in the severity of secondary conditions, and expect to see a larger change over time. Specifically, we saw a decrease in severity in arthritis, isolation, and problems with access.

This outcomes study of already-exercising adults with disabilities and complex health conditions demonstrates continued gains from regular

exercise. The decrease in secondary conditions and in the severity of those secondary conditions translates to real improvements in health for these individuals. Support for fitness services for individuals with physical disabilities is an effective way to promote health and fitness in a population at risk.

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