



## **Functional Reach Improvement in Normal Older Women After Alexander Technique Instruction**

**Author:** Ronald J. Dennis

**Journal:** *Journal of Gerontology* (1999) 54A M8-M11

**Abstract:**

### **BACKGROUND**

Functional reach (FR) is a clinical measure of balance. The Alexander Technique (AT) is a nonexercise approach to the improvement of body mechanics. This study investigated a possible relationship between FR performance and AT instruction.

### **METHODS**

Three groups comprising women older than 65, with the exception of one male control, were studied:

1 a pilot group

2 experimental group

3 control group

Groups 1 and 2 were given eight 1-hour, bi-weekly sessions of AT instruction with pre- and posttests in FR, whereas group 3 was only given pre- and posttests in FR.

### **RESULTS**

Groups 1 and 2 both showed significant improvement in FR performance. Group 2 was retested 1 month after posttest and showed a slight decrease in FR performance. For Groups 1 and 2, a questionnaire allowing qualitative responses on a four-item scale showed an overall positive response to the AT instruction.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

AT instruction may be effective in improving balance and therefore reducing the incidence of falls in normal older women.

Copyright © The Gerontological Society of America.

Reproduced by permission of the publisher.

To consult the whole article, contact *Journal of Gerontology*.