

“It’s more fun doing things together”

**International Safe Falls Conference
Tokai University 12 – 13 December, 2024**

go independent



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The judo spirit in research!

Being the change we want to see



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- Sharing is caring
- Cooperation & collaboration
- Finding common ground
- Agree on the rules
- Systematize learning
- Individual styles

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE SAFE FALLING for the ELDERLY through JUDO

University of Hertfordshire UH TOKAI UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL JUDO FEDERATION IJF ACADEMY 国際柔道連盟 JUDOs judospace.com DEFIER



- Consensus statement - Netherlands
- SBFC – Test Sweden, Spain, Australia, & ?
- From 5 step scale (0-4) to 9 steps (0-4 with half steps) ? (including half steps). Multicountry validation ?



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Known riskfactors for frailty and falls:

- Low physical activity
- Inadquate protein intake
- Unsatisfactory social networks

Project: GoIndependent (part 2) - An explorative collaborative research program (2020 – 2023) bringing Swedish and Japanese researchers and projects together to combat frailty and falls funded by JST (Japan) and Vinnova (Sweden).



Judo4Balance – Group 3 & 4



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19 persons

- 17 women
- 2 men

Median age 82 years

- youngest 73 yrs
- oldest 92 yrs

Results confirmed earlier studies:

- It is feasible in a 10 - 16 week period to teach fall techniques which could be protective against falls and fall injuries through the Judo4Balance Exercise program.
- Improve physical functions related to the risk of falls.

Subsample of 9 participants:

- **Give new insights into participants' experience of Judo4Balance and other exercise programs as preventive measures against falls for older adults regardless of physical status**



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Individual Interview study about exercise programs a part of the Swedish Intervention

Post 6 month intervention: 12 weeks x 2 times 45 min/week

Training: Judo4Balance and Safe Steps (säkra steg)

Method: Semi-structured individual interviews with participants at six month post intervention follow up. Transcribed verbatim and content analysis performed.

Ethical Considerations: Approved by Ethical Review Authority (reg. No 2019-05778)



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Reflections by participants on Judo4Balance Exercise Program and other Exercise Programs Developed for Older Persons





Reasons for signing up for exercise and meal research

- Fear of falling
- Previous falls
- Desire to reduce fall risk in the future
- Curious about research
- A friend or spouse brought me.

Reasons for compliance to Judo4Balance program

- Enjoying social interaction and peer support
 - Fun exercises and games
 - Learning something new
 - Improving physical qualities
 - On the schedule
 - Impressing others: being a “grandparent” doing judo
-



Social interaction and peer support!

The participants were overwhelmingly positive about the group-based activities and the group support as a reason for motivating oneself to attend the training.

“I cannot say that I got that many new insights, but it was practice. You know in theory, but you need to do it practically also and this was really bringing theory to practice, because it (the exercise) was like two times a week.”

“The social aspect was very important, we all had different problems, age and size but still the social part was very important for the group.”

“For me falling was very difficult but I had the whole group around me saying good M. you can make it...It was very important with the group support”.

Judo4Balance pointed out as something different from other types of strength and aerobic group training offered to seniors



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“At “gym exercise groups” everybody is just busy with their own training... they do not really care about the group, here it was different”

“You cannot speak to each other group exercises when there is music”

Routine and scheduled activity as important for “getting it done” (some)

“It’s fun to meet the participants but the most important thing was that it was scheduled as a routine. We (she and her husband) were always there”

After the intervention participants mentioned a “void” of no group exercise

“Yes, I have the app but it’s difficult to get motivated on my own”

“I have problems getting it (app) to work but I remember some exercises by heart”

“All I do for exercises these days are walks, walks and walks....”

“I miss the social interaction”.

“I do not have the energy to do any exercise... my doctor thinks it might be a depression.”

Judo4Balance - one tool for a more independent life.



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I got weak during the pandemic but now thanks to this exercise I can go dancing again after a 3 year stop

So grateful for the training. I fell twice at the public swimming pool and landed right without hurting myself. I'm feeling more relaxed; although learning falling techniques is hard work.

I feel much safer and confident now walking on cobblestones. I know how to do it (the falls) although I'm still a little scared to try it...



This training has challenged me in new ways. I have signed up for the follow up judo course for seniors

Back Up



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Several of the participants would have liked to have more information and learning sessions about nutrition, not just the social situation and eating lunch together.



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“I would have liked to have more information about the food. I live alone and I’m really bad at cooking for myself and knowing what I need (to eat)”

When prompted by the interviewer by learning that the Japanese “*sister intervention*” (Hidaka et. al., 2023) had offered cooking classes to its participants, several participants said:

“that would have been a great addition to the program”

The mealtime manager confirms that it was quite feasible to prepare these meals however, the need for more information to the participants would have been beneficial:

I found it quite easy, and not so much more expensive (how much more expensive?) to prepare these enriched meals and serve them to the participants. It was not so much extra work.

“The majority was grateful to get a free meal after the group exercise. However, I do not know if they were aware of the nutritional recommendations for their age group. I think there is a knowledge gap here”

Participatory Action Research & Judo4Balance



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- Contributing with theoretical knowledge in the design phase and throughout the process.
- Constant evaluations and feedback loops
- “Democratizing research”
- Learning together in real life settings !



<http://www.participatoryactionresearch.net>