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The Relationship Between Leisure Activities and SuperAging

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Abstract

In recent years, a novel field of aging research has emerged, focusing on what is known as SuperAging, where individuals exhibit exceptional cognitive functions. Besides genetics, research explores modifiable factors, such as lifestyle, that may contribute to SuperAging. This study, supported by the Czech Science Foundation (GA22-24846S), aimed to investigate whether leisure activities undertaken throughout the life course are related to SuperAging status in oldest old women. Using the Retrospective Self-Assessment Questionnaire (RETROS), participants were asked to recall physical and cognitive leisure activities they engaged in on a long-term basis during their life since they were 30 years old. The sample comprised 225 healthy women aged 80 years or older, with a mean age of 82.82 ± 2.93 ranging from 80 to 96 years. Among them, 106 (47.1%) were classified as SuperAgers, while 119 (52.9%) were not. The order of the most frequently mentioned physical activities: walking, cycling, exercising, swimming, and gardening; and cognitive activities: reading, self-education, crosswords, sudoku, and cultural enjoyment. Although more SuperAging women engaged in swimming (SA $n = 52$; nonSA $n = 47$) and crosswords (SA $n = 38$; nonSA $n = 35$), these differences did not reach statistical significance. The findings showed no significant association between the specific types of retrospectively recalled leisure activities and SuperAging status. While the study found no direct link between specific leisure activities and SuperAging, deeper analysis considering intensity, duration, and overall engagement might reveal associations.

Keywords: cognitive activities, cognitive function, life style, physical activities, retrospective self-assessment questionnaire