(S39) THERMOSENSIVITY AND FATIGUE AFFECT PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
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Background: Thermosensitivity (TS), characterized by worsening of neurologic symptoms due to increased body temperature (minimum increase of 0.5°C), is common in individuals with multiple sclerosis (MS) because of further slowing of axonal conductivity in previously demyelinated nerve fibers. Common symptoms induced by TS include blurred vision and paresthesias. Fatigue, described as lassitude, is one of the most common complaints expressed by people with MS. Both TS and fatigue can lead to decreased participation in physical activity (PA) in this population. Objectives: The primary objective of this study was to determine through self-report whether TS or fatigue affects PA levels in individuals diagnosed with MS. Methods: Seventy-seven men and women between the ages of 18 and 69 years (mean ± SD age, 45.2 ± 1.4 years) with a diagnosis of MS according to McDonald criteria participated in this study. Physical activity level was measured by the Godin Leisure-Time Exercise Questionnaire. Fatigue was measured by the Fatigue Severity Scale (FSS). TS was recorded by self-report. Results: Of the group, 83.3% reported TS (91.8% of females and 65.2% of males). Individuals who reported TS participated significantly less in PA than individuals who did not report TS (P < .05). There was a moderate negative correlation (P < .01) between PA and FSS. Significant gender differences were seen for FSS (P < .05) and PA (P < .05), with men reporting less fatigue and more participation in PA than women. Type of MS did not influence participation in PA or FSS (P > .05). Conclusions: Individuals with MS who scored higher on the FSS and those who reported TS had lower participation in PA. Conversely, individuals with higher rates of PA had lower scores on the FSS and no reports of TS. According to our results, both TS and fatigue have a negative effect on participation in PA in individuals diagnosed with MS.

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