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Rehabilitation of adolescent idiopathic scoliosis: results of exercises and bracing from a series of clinical studies. Europa Medicophysica-SIMFER 2007 Award Winner

Negrini S., Atanasio S., Zaina F., Romano M

ISICO, Italian Scientific Spine Institute Milan, Italy

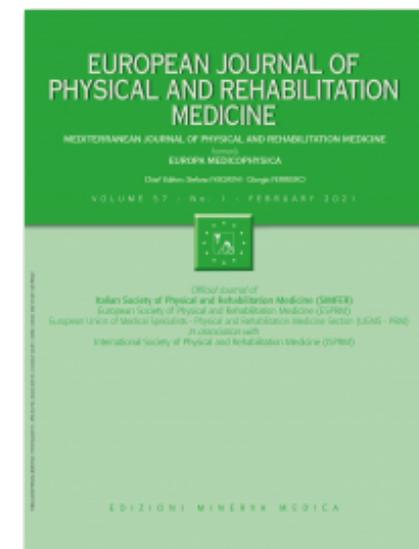
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Aim. Rehabilitation of adolescent idiopathic scoliosis (AIS) requires a careful choice from among the possible treatments, such as bracing and exercises, according to the patient's needs. According to the literature, there is little evidence regarding the efficacy of these rehabilitation instruments. During the past few years, a full series of studies has been carried out to investigate their efficacy. The aim of this paper was to summarize all these results.

Methods. Three systematic reviews (two on exercises and one on manual therapy), and four cohort prospective studies were performed. The prospective studies included two trials with a prospective control group on exercises (one to avoid bracing and one in preparation to bracing) and two trials with retrospective control group on a new brace developed by the Authors (Sforzesco brace and SPoRT concept of correction versus Lyon brace and Risser cast).

Results. Results show that in literature there is proof of level 1b on exercises but no studies on manual therapy. High quality exercises like Scientific Exercises Approach to Scoliosis (SEAS) have more efficacy than usual physiotherapy, significantly reducing brace prescription in one year from 25% of cases to 6%. Moreover, such exercises help to obtain the best results in bracing first correction. The Sforzesco brace has proved to have more efficacy than the Lyon brace, whereas it has the same efficacy — but reduced side effects and impact on quality of life — than the Risser brace.

Conclusion. With an efficient management of data collection, it is possible to develop a set of studies aimed at verifying the efficacy of clinical daily rehabilitation approaches.



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