

2014

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Recommended Citation

Adkins, Katherine; Moxley, Alexis; and Petkus, Catherine, "A Systematic Review: The Effectiveness of Occupational Therapy Interventions for Individuals with Multiple Sclerosis" (2014). *Systematic Reviews*. 1.
https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ot_systematic_reviews/1

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**A Systematic Review: The Effectiveness of Occupational Therapy Interventions for
Individuals with Multiple Sclerosis**

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RESEARCH PROJECT

Submitted to the Department of Occupational Therapy
Grand Valley State University
Grand Rapids, Michigan
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**Master of Science in Occupational Therapy
2014**

Abstract

Background: Individuals with multiple sclerosis experience a range of symptoms including blurred vision, poor coordination, tremors, numbness, fatigue, concentration and memory problems, and/or blindness. Given the range of symptoms and resulting limitations, individuals with MS will experience occupational challenges, which lead to referrals for occupational therapy. The goal of occupational therapy is to enable individuals to engage in activities that one wants to or needs to participate in. **Objective:** To investigate the effectiveness of occupational therapy interventions that are currently being provided to individuals with multiple sclerosis.

Methods: Researchers searched four scholarly databases, including CINAHL, PubMed, PsychINFO, and OT Search. The databases were searched using two key terms, “multiple sclerosis” and “occupational therapy,” in order to promote a general search of related articles. After the database search, articles were assessed using the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. **Results:** A total of 18 articles met the inclusion criteria and were analyzed for content. The interventions were categorized into five themes by the researchers. The themes identified include: (a) energy conservation, (b) cognitive, (c) neuromuscular, (d) prevention, and (e) general symptom management. **Conclusion:** A variety of occupational therapy interventions are currently used with individuals who have MS and result in positive outcomes. However, within this systematic review, the effectiveness of these interventions was determined by level of evidence. Therefore, it was concluded that energy conservation is the most effective and cognitive intervention is moderately effective. The researchers concluded that this has implications on the field occupational therapy and further research is needed to promote evidence-based practice for individuals with MS.

