



Healthways SilverSneakers® Fitness Program

Proven to Reduce Health Care Costs of Members with Diabetes

Groundbreaking study focuses on benefits for members with diabetes

Older adults with diabetes who are enrolled in the SilverSneakers Fitness Program are admitted to the hospital less often, have lower inpatient care costs, and have significant reductions in their overall health care costs after only a year of participation, according to a recent study published in *Diabetes Care*, the journal of the American Diabetes Association.¹

The study, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and conducted by Group Health and the University of Washington, extends a January 2008 study that looked at nearly 5,000 SilverSneakers participants over a two-year period. Researchers examined whether the impact of SilverSneakers participation on health care costs and utilization also applies to older adults with chronic conditions such as diabetes.²

Study: Health Care Use and Costs Associated with Use of a Health Club Membership Benefit in Older Adults with Diabetes

The health care costs from SilverSneakers members with diabetes (study group) were compared to costs from diabetic members of the same age and gender who were not enrolled in SilverSneakers (control group). Key conclusions include:

Lower total health care costs

- During the first year of the program, the study group generated \$1,600 less per member in total health care costs than the control group. During the second year, continued reductions of \$1,230 per member were seen for the study group compared to the control group.

Lower hospitalization rate

- Study group members had 29 percent fewer hospital admissions than control group members.
- Costs per member for inpatient care were similar for study and control group members.



**SilverSneakers positively
affects members' health care
costs, as a result of:**

- fewer hospital admissions
- lower inpatient care costs
- significant reductions in overall costs

(continued on back)



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Greater savings with more participation

- Participants who averaged two or more visits per week in the first year of the study had significantly lower costs in the second year than those members who visited the fitness center fewer than two times per week in year one.
- Members participating more frequently generated \$2,141 less per member in total health care costs than members with less participation.

The study suggests that the health care cost reductions associated with participation in an exercise program for older adults in general also apply to older adults with diabetes. In fact, the impact on total health care cost is seen earlier and is three times greater in this higher risk group.

To obtain more information about this study, please visit www.healthways.com.

For more information
on the SilverSneakers
Fitness Program,
call 480.783.9555 or visit
www.silversneakers.com.



¹ Huong, H.Q., Maciejewski, M.L., Gao, S., Lin, E., Williams, B., & LeGerfo, J.P. (2008). Health Care Use and Costs Associated with Use of a Health Club Membership Benefit in Older Adults with Diabetes. *Diabetes Care*, 31(8), 1562-1567. <http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/vol31/issue8>.

² http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2008/jan/07_0148.htm.