Impact of A Group-Singing Program on Older Adult Health in Senior Living Communities: A Pilot Study
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BACKGROUND
• The number of older adults will triple by 2050 (AoA, 2013).
• Aging contributes to biological, cognitive, and physical declines that affect functioning and well-being.
• Participating in a group-singing program may be beneficial to healthy aging through engaging in active music-making activities and breathing exercises (Luo et al., 2012; Engen, 2005; Bonilha et al., 2009).

PURPOSE
• Evaluate the impact of a group-singing program on older adults’ cognitive function, pulmonary health, and quality of life (QoL).
• Determine the feasibility of a group singing program.

METHOD
• Pre/post-test quasi-experimental design
• Group singing intervention: pre-singing exercises, song-singing and learning, and socialization.
• Classes were 75 minutes/week for 12 weeks.
• Inclusion criteria: ≥ 60 years, no self-reported diagnosis of dementia, and able to hear conversations within 2 feet.
• Study sites: 3 senior living communities (Pacific NW)
• Outcomes:
  - Cognition: Trail Making Tests (TMT), Verbal Fluency Tests (VFT), and Word Recall Tests (WRT)
  - Lung function: Spirometry FEV1, Maximum Inspiratory/Expiratory Pressure (MIP; MEP)
  - QoL: CASP-19 (Control, Autonomy, Self-realization, and Pleasure)
  - Program feasibility & acceptability: Study exit survey (20 items, each with a 10-point Likert Scale)

CONCLUSION
A group-singing program with deep breathing training and song-learning may promote memory, language, speech information processing, executive function, and respiratory muscle strength in older adults. The program was feasible and well-accepted. A clinical trial with a larger sample is indicated.