

Clinical Trial Protocol

Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

11 Sep 2026

Effects of combined and dual-task training on brain electrical activity, proprioception and balance in athletes with chronic ankle instability: A randomized controlled clinical trial

Protocol summary

Study aim

Comparison of the effectiveness of combined and dual-task exercises on brain electrical activity, proprioception, and balance in athletes with chronic ankle instability.

Design

The present study is a randomized controlled clinical trial that includes a statistical population of male and women athletes (18-25 years old) with chronic ankle instability.

Settings and conduct

Men and women with chronic ankle instability who refer to orthopedic and physiotherapy clinics in Hamadan will be recruited. Eligible participants will be enrolled in the study and randomly allocated to the intervention and control groups using block randomization. This study will be conducted as a single-blind trial, in which the assessor will be blinded to group allocation.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: Athletes with chronic ankle instability, Cumberland Ankle Instability Tool (CAIT) score ≤ 24 .
Exclusion criteria prior to randomization: History of anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injury

Intervention groups

Intervention group 1: Participants will undergo separate neuromuscular and cognitive training for 8 weeks, 3 sessions per week, 60 minutes per session. Neuromuscular training includes balance exercises (eyes open/closed), balance board exercises, and high-knee walking, while cognitive training consists of isolated mental tasks (e.g., reversing four-digit numbers).
Intervention group 2: Participants will undergo dual-task training for 8 weeks, 3 sessions per week, using the same neuromuscular exercises performed simultaneously with cognitive tasks, such as backward counting during balance exercises. Control group: The control group will receive no rehabilitation intervention during the 8-week period.

Main outcome variables

Electrical activity of the brain

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20251221068402N1**

Registration date: **2026-02-06, 1404/11/17**

Registration timing: **registered_while_recruiting**

Last update: **2026-02-06, 1404/11/17**

Update count: **0**

Registration date

2026-02-06, 1404/11/17

Registrant information

Name

Masoud Azizian

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

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Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2026-01-26, 1404/11/06

Expected recruitment end date

2026-03-03, 1404/12/12

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title

Effects of combined and dual-task training on brain electrical activity, proprioception and balance in athletes with chronic ankle instability: A randomized controlled clinical trial

Public title

The effect of combined exercises on the electrical brain activity of athletes with chronic ankle instability.

Purpose

Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria**Inclusion criteria:**

No history of knee ligament or meniscus injury, which will be verified by subjects completing a medical history form
No history of fractures or surgery on lower limb joints. No history of neurological or vestibular system disorders.
History of at least one ankle sprain in the past 12 months prior to study entry that resulted in a cessation of physical activity for at least one day
The person has had the feeling of emptying at least twice in the past 6 months. Score less than 24 on the Cumberland Ankle Instability Questionnaire.

Exclusion criteria:

People with anterior cruciate ligament tears. Athletes with chronic ankle instability who are under 18 and over 25 years of age. Positive anterior ankle abduction test.

Age

From **18 years** old to **25 years** old

Gender

Both

Phase

N/A

Groups that have been masked

- Data analyser

Sample size

Target sample size: **66**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)

Randomized

Randomization description

After confirming eligibility criteria and obtaining written informed consent, participants will be randomly allocated in a 1:1:1 ratio to one of the three study groups. The randomization sequence will be generated by an independent individual who is not involved in participant recruitment, assessment, intervention, or data analysis, using Random Allocation Software (RAS) and a variable block randomization method with block sizes of 3 and 6 to prevent predictability of the allocation sequence. Allocation codes for each participant will be placed sequentially into opaque, light-proof, sealed, and consecutively numbered envelopes (SNOSE). After a participant is definitively enrolled in the study, the corresponding envelope will be opened in sequence and the assigned group will be revealed. Accordingly, group assignment will remain concealed from researchers and outcome assessors until the moment of allocation, thereby minimizing selection bias.

Blinding (investigator's opinion)

Single blinded

Blinding description

The evaluation of the participants will be performed by a physiotherapist who is blinded to group allocation.

Placebo

Not used

Assignment

Parallel

Other design features**Secondary Ids**

empty

Ethics committees**1****Ethics committee****Name of ethics committee**

Bu Ali Sina University Ethics Committee

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Bu-Ali Sina University, Shahid Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan Street, Hamedan

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Hamadan

Postal code

۳۸۶۹۵-۶۵۱۷۸

Approval date

2025-10-05, 1404/07/13

Ethics committee reference number

IR.BASU.REC.1404.032

Health conditions studied**1****Description of health condition studied**

chronic ankle instability

ICD-10 code

M25.373

ICD-10 code description

Other instability, unspecified ankle

Primary outcomes**1****Description**

brain electrical activity.

Timepoint

Before and after the 8-week intervention

Method of measurement

Using the Medina Teb Electroencephalography device, the electrical activity of the brain is measured in a state of single-leg balance.

Secondary outcomes

1

Description

Quality of life

Timepoint

Before and after the 8-week intervention

Method of measurement

The Short Form Health Survey (SF-36)

2

Description

Static balance

Timepoint

Before and after the 8-week intervention

Method of measurement

Using a single-leg Zabis foot pressure device manufactured in the United States.

3

Description

Functional disability

Timepoint

Before and after the 8-week intervention

Method of measurement

Oswestry Questionnaire

4

Description

proprioception

Timepoint

Before and after the 8-week intervention

Method of measurement

Electrogoniometr

Intervention groups

1

Description

Intervention group 1: Participants in intervention group 1 will receive a combined training program consisting of neuromuscular and cognitive exercises performed separately. The program will be implemented over 8 weeks, with three sessions per week, each lasting 60 minutes (24 sessions in total). Each session will comprise two main components. The neuromuscular component, designed to improve postural control, balance, coordination, and strengthening of the lower-limb muscles—particularly the ankle, will include balance exercises such as single-leg stance on a stable surface, single-leg stance on a balance board, toe walking, and the runner's knee exercise. All balance exercises will be performed under both eyes-open and eyes-closed conditions to increase sensorimotor challenge. In addition, ankle strengthening exercises will be incorporated to enhance muscular strength and motor control. The cognitive component will consist of mental

and cognitive tasks performed separately from the neuromuscular rehabilitation program, such as backward counting of four-digit numbers, aimed at engaging attention, working memory, and cognitive processing. To comply with the principle of progressive overload, the intensity and/or complexity of the exercises will be increased progressively, with progression applied during weeks 2, 4, and 6.

Category

Rehabilitation

2

Description

Intervention group 2 received a dual task/task training program in which neuromuscular exercises and cognitive exercises were performed simultaneously to increase cognitive load and simultaneously engage the neuromuscular and musculoskeletal systems. This intervention was conducted for 8 weeks, with sessions held 3 times a week for 30 minutes each (24 sessions in total). The content of neuromuscular exercises mainly included balance exercises performed in the form of single-leg standing, tiptoe walking, and static and dynamic balance exercises. To increase the sensorimotor challenge, these exercises were performed in both eyes open and eyes closed modes. Simultaneously with the balance exercises, the cognitive task was performed in the form of counting back four digits to increase cognitive load during motor activity. During the course, the difficulty of the exercises was gradually adjusted by changing the visual conditions (eyes open/closed), increasing the duration of maintaining balance positions, or increasing the complexity of the cognitive task. To perform the exercises, a safe training space was used, and if necessary, simple balance tools such as a balance board were used, and all sessions were carried out according to a specific program and in compliance with safety principles.

Category

Rehabilitation

3

Description

Control group: Athletes went about their daily activities and did not do any rehabilitation.

Category

N/A

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center

Bu-Ali Sina University

Full name of responsible person

Ali Yalfani

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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity
Vice President for Research, Bu-Ali Sina University,
Hamadan
Full name of responsible person
Arash Gorbani
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Grant name

Grant code / Reference number

Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?

Yes

Title of funding source

Vice President for Research, Bu-Ali Sina University,
Hamadan

Proportion provided by this source

100

Public or private sector

Public

Domestic or foreign origin

Domestic

Category of foreign source of funding

empty

Country of origin

Type of organization providing the funding

Academic

Person responsible for general inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity
Bu-Ali sina University

Full name of responsible person
Ali Yalfani
Position
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Latest degree
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Other areas of specialty/work
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Person responsible for updating data

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Latest degree

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Other areas of specialty/work

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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)

Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Study Protocol

Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan

Not applicable

Informed Consent Form

Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Clinical Study Report

Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Analytic Code

Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Data Dictionary

Not applicable

Title and more details about the data/document

The files containing data measured by the assessors will
be shared, if needed, after the completion of the study.

When the data will become available and for how long

The sharing period will begin one year following the
publication of the study results and related articles.

To whom data/document is available

Researchers and researchers whose field of work is
similar to the present research and are employed in
universities

Under which criteria data/document could be used

The data of the present study will be provided to other
researchers only for comparison with future studies and
the use of data and their analysis is not allowed.

From where data/document is obtainable

Email adress m.azizian@phe.basu.ac.ir Phone number:
00989188157747

What processes are involved for a request to access data/document

A full description of the research should be provided and
the details of the use of the data should be fully
described.

Comments