

MARCIALONGA SCIENCE ON ELDERLY

For the fifth edition of MarcialongaScience, CeRiSM (center for Research, Mountain, Sport and Health of the University of Verona) proposed the study “***MarcialongaScience on Elderly***”, supported by the Marcialonga Organising Committee.

The study had the goal to study some physical, physiological and socio-emotional parameters of the health of over 65 skiers who have been training for and participating to Marcialonga.

In literature, there are not so many studies analysing the benefits of a consequent and prolonged training that involved many different parts of the body, from cardiovascular functions, to strength, resistance, flexibility, postural control and reaction. These parameters are naturally getting worse when getting older with a sedentary life, representing a risk for the physical and psychological wellbeing of older people.

40 skiers from all over Italy took part to the study, 36 men and 4 women, being involved in blood testing, tests for the elasticity of the arterial walls, strength and balance and reaction times.

3 surprising results :

- 1) In comparison to the medium person of the same age conducting a sedentary life:
 - Better values, both physical and physiological like cardiovascular health, low fat presence, more muscular strength and better breathing capacity
 - Very high balance control and reaction times way below the medium
 - High sleep quality and better perception of life's quality
- 2) The values of the test are not changing for the categories 60-70 e 70-80 anni → qualities are maintained
- 3) The result of the test is not depending on the race result: the 6-8 hours per week of training guarantee for optimal body condition independently from the performance during the races.

take home messages:

- 1) HEALTH FOR OVER 65 PEOPLE DEPENDS ON CONSEQUENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RATHER THAN ON AGONISTIC ACTIVITY
- 2) CROSS COUNTRY SKIING REPRESENTS A GREAT SPORT FOR A SUCCESSFUL AGING!!

