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DARANEE THONGSUMRIT : THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THAI TRADITIONAL  
EXERCISE PROGRAM FOR OSTEOARTHRITIS OF THE KNEE IN THE ELDERLY, AMPHUR  
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At present, the number of elderly is increasing, and many of them are facing health problems. One of the factors affecting their poor health is the economic recession. Many elderly are suffering with osteoarthritis, especially osteoarthritis of the knee. The purpose of this quasi-experimental research was to study the effect of a traditional Thai exercise program for osteoarthritis of the knee among the elderly. Self-efficacy and social support theories were applied for the development of the program. The 72 subjects were elderly in Amphur Watphleng who suffered from primary osteoarthritis of the knee. The samples were selected according to study criteria, then assigned into 2 groups: the experimental and the comparison group. The experimental group received specific instruction about Thai traditional physical exercise and the comparison group received routine instruction from the district hospital. The data were collected before and after the experiment by interview questionnaires and observation checklist. Percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, t-test and paired t-test were used to analyse the data.

The results of this study showed that the experimental group had significantly higher mean scores of self-efficacy expectation, outcome expectation, muscle recovery and osteoarthritis of knee condition control than before the experiment and than those of the comparison group. The difference in mean scores of those variables before and after the experiment in the experimental group was also significantly higher than that in the comparison group. These results showed that the instruction of Thai traditional physical exercise with the application of self-efficacy and social support theories can control and relieve osteoarthritis of the knee condition in the elderly group. The elderly who received this instruction could reduce their use of medicine and lower their pain from osteoarthritis of the knee. Therefore, it is recommended that the Thai traditional physical exercise program should be provided to elderly to reduce their suffering from osteoarthritis of the knee.