Older women’s daily rhythm of activities in a supporting environment, Living with persistent musculoskeletal pain.

Older Women’s descriptions of how they activate themselves in their everyday living and what will promote their activity abilities.

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Background
One common health problem among the older population is pain. About 50-70% of the older people live with some kind of pain. Living with persistent pain affects their ability in activities. Older people who are limited in their activities report decreased quality of life. There are generally more women, compared to men, who report a decreased quality of life. To develop rehabilitation programs, there is a need of more knowledge how older women living alone and have persistent pain describe their everyday activities and what will promote their ability in activities.

Aim
The aim of the study was to increase knowledge about how older women, living alone with persistent musculoskeletal pain, describe their ability in activities, the meaning of ability in activities and what promote their ability in activities.

Method
Qualitative interviews for an explorative, inductive qualitative design was chosen for the study. Twelve women with musculoskeletal pain and living alone (ages 66-93) participated in the study. The interviews focused on how the women described their ability in activities, the meaning of ability in activities and what they thought could promote their ability in activities in their daily life. The interviews were verbatim transcribed and analyzed with qualitative content analysis with an inductive approach.

Results
The findings were condensed into two general themes of which one theme represents the women´s description of their ability in activities and what promote their ability in activities, i.e. “A Daily rhythm of activities in a supporting environment”. Another general theme that represents the women´s description of the meaning of their abilities was also found, i.e. “You have to accept, adapt and be dependent with a feeling of independence and safeness”.

Conclusions
It was concluded that what the women described as ability in activities also seemed to promote their ability in activities in daily life, and to manage their daily life they were dependent of different supporting activities.