348 received information about a health promotion program

45 were excluded: they did not provide written informed-consent or had a serious illness or abnormality

303 were examined with lumbar spine MRI:
255 before the exercise program, 48, 12-18 months later

33 were excluded: 16 for poor images 17 because of uncertainty about their disc levels

270 (1350 discs) were assessed for disc degeneration with MRI:
222 before the exercise program, 48, 12-18 months later

3 discs were invisible

1,347 discs were evaluated

Figure 1. Study profile.
Figure 2.

Midsagittal view on T2 density-weighted images of discs graded according to a modified Pfirrmann’s classification. The detail of the classification is described in Table 1. Grades IV and V were considered degenerated.