

HEALTH

Study Finds Benefits of Light Exercise

Key is offsetting our sedentary ways

A new study looking at activity trends and health outcomes for adults found that you don't need to kill yourself by running 10 miles a day to gain health benefits — you merely need to log more minutes of light physical activity than of sedentary behavior.

And the bar is pretty low for what constitutes light physical activity, researchers say. It can mean sauntering through a mall window-shopping instead of ordering online, fishing along a riverbank, or ballroom dancing.

In other words, casting a spinner or spinning on the dance floor can help offset our sedentary ways.

The problem, the authors say, is that nearly half of Americans surveyed did not

engage in a sufficient amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (more than 150 minutes a week) and, in fact, spent more time in sedentary mode than even doing light physical activity.

"That's actually rather frightening," said Bradley Cardinal, co-director of the Sport and Exercise Psychology Program at Oregon State University and co-author on the study. "About half of the people in this country are incredibly sedentary — basically, couch potatoes. And that can have some very negative effects on one's health."

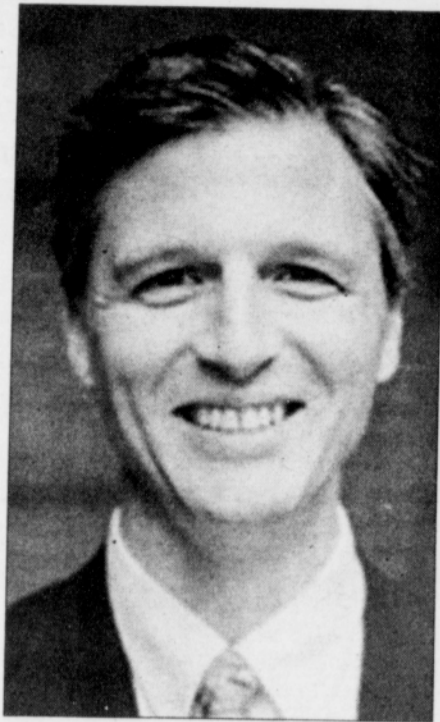
The study looked at the activity patterns of more than 5,500 adults. Participants wore accelerometers record-

ing movements that could be broken down by the minute, and the researchers found that 47 percent of Americans engaged in less than 150 minutes a week of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity and, perhaps more importantly, logged fewer minutes of light physical activity than of sedentary behavior.

They found that when the balance was on the positive side — adults spent more time moving than sitting — there was a strong association with favorable levels of triglyc-

erides and insulin.

"It is preferable to get at least 30 minutes a day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity in each day, but we now know that if you sit for the remainder of the day after getting this dose of exercise, you might not necessarily be escaping the risk of developing chronic disease," said Paul Loprinzi, a former doctoral student under Cardinal in OSU's College of Public Health and Human Sciences. Now an assistant professor at Bellarmine University, Loprinzi is lead author on the study.



Bradley Cardinal



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HEALTH WATCH

Better Breathers -- An asthma educational support group meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month from 1:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. at Adventist Medical Center. For information, call 503-251-6830.

Powerful Tools For Caregivers -- 6-week educational series designed to help family caregivers take care of themselves while caring for relatives or friends with chronic illness. Class size is limited, and registration is required. Call 503-413-8018.

Leg Alert Screening -- Check for peripheral arterial disease with this safe, simple screening using ankle and arm blood pressure. The fee is \$40. To schedule an appointment, call 503-251-6137.

Heart Talk Support Group -- Meets on the second Monday of each month; from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, call 503-251-6260.

Families with Mental Illness -- A free, 12-week course for people whose family members live with mental illness is offered at Emanuel Hospital, Mt. Hood Medical Center and Providence Medical Center. The course has been described as "life-changing" by former participants. Registration is required, call 503-203-3326.

Chronic Pain Support Group -- Meets the first Wednesday at 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and the third Wednesday of each month, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call 503-256-4000.