

## **Looking to Beat Cancer? Just Exercise More, Scientists Discover**

*By: David Gutierrez, Natural News*

A more active lifestyle doesn't just reduce your risk of cancer and improve survival rates among cancer patients: a new study conducted by researchers from Loyola University and published in the *Journal of Physical Activity & Health* shows that exercise also halves the risk of death among cancer survivors.

Better diagnoses and treatments for cancer mean that survivors are living longer than ever before, said study co-author Kathleen Wolin. This makes the study's findings particularly relevant.

"Physical activity should be actively promoted to such individuals to enhance longevity," Wolin said.

### **"Much less likely to die"**

The study was conducted using data from Harvard's Alumni Health Study, which collected health information on men who attended Harvard between the years of 1916 and 1950. In 1988, 1,021 cancer survivors completed detailed questionnaires about their exercise habits, including sports, going for walks and even climbing stairs. The men updated this information in 1993.

All participants were over the age of 71 at the study's start and had previously been diagnosed with a form of cancer other than non-melanoma skin cancer.

The researchers found that men who exercised enough to burn more than 12,600 calories per week (an average of 1,800 per day) were 48 percent less likely to die from any cause than men who burned less than 2,100 calories per week (an average of 300 per day). They were also 38 percent less likely to die from another case of cancer and 49 percent less likely to die from cardiovascular disease.

A 176-pound man who followed health guidelines to take a brisk, 30-minute walk five days per week would burn 4,200 calories from exercise in that week.

### **Exercise is for everyone**

Although the new study is the first to show that exercise extends the lifespan of cancer survivors, it is only the latest in a long line of studies showing the benefits of exercise in improving health, including fighting cancer.

For example, a 2010 study concluded that 3.4 percent of breast cancer cases, 3.8 percent of endometrial cancer cases and 5.3 percent of colon cancer cases could be prevented if people met the recommendation to exercise at least 30 minutes per day, five days per week. This adds up to 3,000 cancers per year that could be prevented by exercise in the United Kingdom alone.

"We know exercise can help reduce the chance of getting cancer in the first place," said Martin Ledwick, of Cancer Research UK.

"Previous studies have [also] suggested exercise can help some people feel better after being diagnosed and cope better with fatigue related to cancer and its treatment."

Studies have shown that breast cancer survivors with lower body weights are significantly less likely to suffer cancer recurrence, while prostate cancer patients who get at least three hours of vigorous exercise per week have significantly higher survival rates.

"It's absolutely true that exercise is shown to be helpful in most cancer cases," said Anne Elliot of Middlesex University. "It also helps hugely with arthritis and circulatory diseases. We know that if you do exercise you are improving your respiratory and immune systems and they are linked to lifespan."

Apart from promoting general health, exercise appears to fight cancer through several different mechanisms. It helps repair the immune system's T-cells, which fight tumors and are also important in aiding chemotherapy recovery. It lowers blood levels of insulin, which has been linked to breast cancer, and of sex hormones that have been linked to cancers of the breast, prostate and uterine lining. It also reduces obesity, which has been linked to many cancers.

**Sources for this article include:**

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk>

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