

Men in their 50s can add two years to their life by exercising advises study

Middle aged men who adopt a routine of regular exercise or physical activity can outlive their sedentary neighbours by 2.3 years and moderate exercisers by over a year, researchers have found.

Working up a sweat and getting out of breath has been shown to have an equally positive effect on health as giving up smoking - in addition to warding off a range of diseases.

The study which focused on the changes in the physical activity of 2025 men in Sweden was carried out over 3 years to measure the influence on the incidence of dying. Thirty-five years on, mortality rates were highest in those men with inactive lifestyles and lowest in those who were most active. Researchers have suggested that the benefit of additional exercise may not be seen for 5 to 10 years.

A leading professor in men's health at the of Leeds Metropolitan University states that "many men, when they hit their middle years, feel they are too old to be taking up exercise and that sport is a young man's game – so they're less likely to start. This is exactly the age where they should be looking to start. Men should be helping to protect their health by walking, playing a sport, or just using the stairs. You're never too old to start doing such activities."

It has now almost become knowledge that Britons have become less inactive over the last 30 years due to the decline in manual labour, and increase in car use and increased electronic entertainment.

Statistics released by the Department of Health states obesity is the most likely cause for 9000 premature deaths each year in England and the increase in type II diabetes, both of which are contributed to by a sedentary lifestyle. This is reinforced by Paul Lincoln, CEO of the National Heart Forum alliance of leading charities, "Physical activity can help reduce a person's risk of getting about 30 major diseases such as heart problems, cancer and strokes."

"The study adds support to what we already know, which is that people who are physically active are half as likely to get cardiovascular disease as those who are inactive. Being active at any age helps control weight and reduce blood pressure and cholesterol. It will provide long-term benefits for your heart health and general health" says Cathy Ross, a cardiac nurse with the British Heart Foundation.

Source:

British Medical Journal: *Total mortality after changes in leisure time physical activity in 50 year old men: 35 year follow-up of population based cohort*

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