



Obesity Linked To Reduced Productivity At Work

Employees who are moderately to extremely obese have reduced productivity on the job, even compared to overweight or mildly obese workers, reports a study in the January Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, official publication of the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM).



Led by Donna M. Gates, Ed.D., R.N., of the University of Cincinnati, the researchers measured various aspects of productivity in a random sample of 341 manufacturing employees. Most of the workers were overweight or obese, including a 23 percent rate of mild obesity (body mass index [BMI] 30 to 34.9) and a 13 percent rate of moderate to extreme obesity (BMI 35 or higher). Another 43 percent of workers were classified as overweight but not obese (BMI 25 to 29.9).

Workers with moderate to extreme obesity had the greatest health-related limitations at work, or "presenteeism." Specifically, moderately to extremely obese workers had limitations in time needed to complete work tasks and ability to meet physical work demands. These limitations were significantly greater than in the overweight or mildly obese groups.

Health-related losses in productivity averaged 4.2 percent for workers with moderate to severe obesity, 1.8 percent higher than for all other employees. Based on an average hourly wage of \$21, the annual costs of presenteeism for moderately to extremely obese workers were nearly \$1,800, about \$500 higher than for other workers.

Employees with moderate to extreme obesity also had increased health-related absenteeism, compared with other workers. Presenteeism, days employees are at work but performing at less than full capacity, is increasingly viewed as an important contributor to costs related to employee health.

The new results suggest obesity has a "threshold effect" on presenteeism, with moderately/extremely obese workers being significantly less productive than other workers. Limitations in performing job tasks and completing work in the expected time could be related to difficulty moving because of increased body size or weight, or because of an increased rate of pain problems due to other maladies such as arthritis.

Workplace programs targeting obesity, especially among the most obese workers, could help to reduce costs due to lost productivity. "The study's results support other research that has indicated that a weight loss of ten percent can yield substantial health and economic benefits," Dr. Gates and colleagues write. "Even modest weight loss could result in hundreds of dollars of improved productivity costs per worker each year."

Mansfield Pointe-Claire is now Open!

Phase 1 of the new Mansfield Athletic Club has opened in Pointe-Claire. The new club is strategically located in the Sources Mega Mall on the corner of Sources and the Transcanada, (along with 40 West and Golf Town). Our newest club offers a unique workout environment with soaring ceilings and lots of natural light. With over 34,000 sq. ft. of space, the club has everything you have come to expect from Mansfield: cutting edge equipment, first class finishes, great fitness programs and of course professional, caring staff.

Phase 1, including all fitness facilities, 3 group exercise studios and luxurious locker rooms, opened January 2nd to excellent response

from the community. Phase 2 will include a full service Day Spa plus a medically-based Wellness Centre and will open in the Spring.

For those members that work downtown but live on the West Island, Mansfield Pointe-Claire is an excellent opportunity to have the best of both worlds with a Dual Club Membership. For simply \$15.00 more per month, you can access both clubs: workout downtown during the week and on the West Island on weekends. Whatever your lifestyle, there are many options to help you get the most out of your Mansfield membership. Simply stop by the Membership offices downtown and add the membership to your regular monthly charges, simple and

easy. Interested? Check out the new club on the web (www.clubmansfield.ca) or simply stop by for a complementary workout. Club telephone number is (514) 426-0321.



Fight the winter blues, make sure you stay in shape!

The right routine restores muscles to their youthful vim

If promises of improved health have yet to lure you into the gym, maybe upping the ante to include turning back the effects of ageing is enough to get you lacing up your gym shoes.

A recent study out of McMaster University in Hamilton showed seniors who followed a basic weight-training routine not only got stronger, they reversed some of the effects of ageing in certain muscles at the cellular level.



“The main, novel finding that we could bring that ageing mitochondria (in muscle cells) pattern back toward a younger person, almost reversing the ageing signature, pretty much by 40, 45 years with six months of weight training,” co-author Mark Tarnopolsky said in a Canadian Press article.

Tarnopolsky’s finding are only the most recent addition to a growing number of studies that suggest exercise can counteract the effects of ageing.

Nevertheless, Timothy Doherty, a clinical scientist at the University of Western Ontario who studies ageing and neuro-muscular function, reminds those seeking the fountain of youth that ageing is inevitable, even amongst fitness fanatics.

Before being accused of offering too harsh a reality check, Doherty doesn’t discount the idea that exercise can slow the ageing process. In fact, he regularly sells exercise as a way to fight the decline in function so often attributed to advancing years. “Exercise

helps you do what you did 10 to 20 years ago,” Doherty said.

According to exercise scientists like Doherty, reversing the ageing process doesn’t mean gaining the ability to relive your most youthful moments on the playing field or getting rid of unwanted wrinkles. Instead, it means that exercise slows the decline of physiological markers like aerobic capacity, strength, muscles mass, bone density and flexibility. Once thought to be an inevitable part of the ageing process, study after study now offers evidences suggesting that declining levels of physical activity, and not advancing age, are what erode physical function.

When Doherty talks about physical function, he means the type of activity that’s part of everyday life, like lifting a garbage can to the crub, carrying a load of laundry up and down the stairs, or planning and pruning the garden. A fit older adult can perform these chores with ease. Those less dedicated to keeping their bodies in shape will see their functional ability decline as the decades add up. Here’s where the old adage “use it or lose it” come into play.

The more we avoid certain activities as we age, the harder it is for our body to perform them when called upon. So, if you’re not challenging the heart and lungs with a regular aerobic workout or haven’t touched your toes since Jean Chrétien’s first term in office, don’t be surprised if you’re huffing and puffing at the slightest bit of activity, or if picking up a dropped quarter is much harder than it used to be.

So how do you knock years of your physiological age? Doherty says exercising your heart and muscles at a moderate intensity two to three times a week is sufficient to deter the effects of inactivity as you age. Lifting a moderate amount of weights for two to three sets for 15 to 20 repetitions a minimum of twice a week is what Doherty suggests to staunch the loss of muscle mass associated with ageing. It’s that loss of muscle that contributes to the decline in function so often thought to be related to ageing.

For adults whose goals are more ambitious than keeping up with the grandchildren, the competitive juices need not dry up as the lines on the forehead start to appear. In fact, athletic performance doesn’t drop as quickly as the years add up. With an appropriate training program, sports performance is thought to stay stable up until age 30 or 40 in

the very fit, followed by a modest decline in speed and an even smaller decline, if any, in endurance up until age 60. After that, most athletes will notice a more marked decline in performance.

If you’ve aged, it’s not too late to reverse the trend. Even exercise started later in life has the ability to turn back the clock. In Tarnopolsky’s study, the older adults began the trial almost 60% weaker than the younger adults. At the end of the six-months training program, however, the 70-year-olds improved their strength by 50%, making the older exercises only 38% weaker than the 20-to-35-year-olds.

If all this good news spurs you to see how much time you can erase, don’t make the mistake of following an exercise routing that hasn’t stood the test of time. Consult with a fitness professional before pulling on your running shoes and working up a sweat. Techniques have changed since Arnold Schwarzenegger ruled the gym, so get professional advice before embarking on an age-defying fitness program.

And remember: While exercise can’t banish grey hair or wrinkles, it can put the bounce back into your step, something possibly missing since the arrival of sensible shoes and elastic waistbands.

Source: National Post.

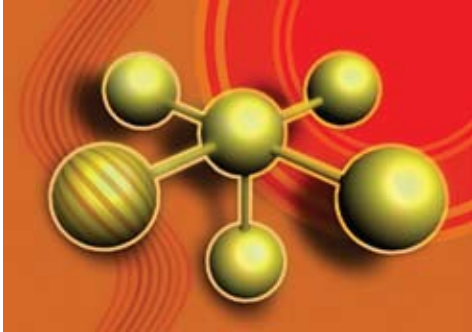


Fitness Trumps Fatness in Determining Risk of Cancer Death in Men

New Study Shows That Fitness Trumps Fatness in Determining Risk of Cancer Death in Men.

The Cooper Institute, a research and education nonprofit located at the world-renowned Cooper Aerobics Center in Dallas, announces a new study published in Obesity showing that fitness trumps fatness in determining risk of cancer mortality among men. Cancer is the second leading cause of death among U.S. men. While tobacco use and poor diet remain the largest contributors to cancer mortality, for the first time there is new research that obesity and low levels of cardiorespiratory fitness contributes to cancer mortality as well.

“This is the first study that shows that sedentary men of all body fatness levels should strive to become at least moderately fit in order to decrease the risk of cancer mortality,” said lead researcher and Director of Professional Education Stephen Farrell, Ph.D. “Due to research by The Cooper Institute, we’ve



long known that fitness is more important than fatness in decreasing the risk of heart disease. Now we know the same is true about death from all cancers among men. This is an important breakthrough to improve men’s health.”

Dr. Farrell studied 38,410 men who completed a comprehensive baseline physical examination at Cooper Clinic in Dallas. Results showed a strong and direct relationship between all measures of body fatness and cancer mortality. Leaner men had significantly lower rates of cancer mortality than fatter men, regardless of the method used to assess body fatness. A strong inverse relationship between cardiorespiratory fitness level and cancer mortality was also observed, showing lower fit men had significantly greater rates of cancer mortality than higher fit men.

The examination included a maximal treadmill exercise test, which provides an objective measure of cardio-respiratory fitness level. A unique feature of the study was that different measures of body fatness including body mass index (BMI), percent body fat, and waist circumference were also performed. The men were followed for an average period of 17.2 years, during which 1,037 cancer deaths occurred.

Another unique feature of the study was an examination of the cancer mortality rates between fit and unfit men within various categories of the different measures of



adiposity or fat levels. Using the three official categories for BMI (normal weight, overweight, obese), fit men in each category had significantly lower death rates from cancer than unfit men. Using the two official categories for waist circumference (obese and non-obese), fit men in each category had significantly lower death rates from cancer than unfit men. Similarly, using two categories for percent body fat (obese and non-obese), fit men in each category also had significantly lower death rates from cancer than unfit men.

Farrell added, “These data suggest that attaining a moderate to high level of cardiorespiratory fitness may decrease some of the cancer mortality risks associated with increased adiposity.”



The Chefs' Corner

by Derek Dammann, Executive Chef at **Le Bistro Mansfield** and at **DNA Restaurant**

Mussel Soup with Saffron

Yield: 10 portions

- 1 tsp saffron threads
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 pounds mussels, scrubbed and de-bearded
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 3 sprigs Italian parsley
- 1 sprig thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- freshly ground black pepper

- 1 cup hot water
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

In a small cup, dissolve the saffron in ¼ cup of the white wine.

In a 10-12 inch sauté pan combine the mussels, onions, garlic, thyme, bay leaf, pepper, the remaining ¾ cup of wine, the water, the saffron mixture and the olive oil and bring to a boil over high heat. Cover and cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until all of the mussels have opened. Remove from the heat and transfer the mussels to a bowl.

Strain the mussel juices into another pan, bring to a boil over medium heat and reduce the mixture by two thirds.

Divide the mussels between 10 warmed bowls, pour over some broth and serve with the herb bruschetta. Serve immediately.

For the herb bruschetta

- 10 slices Italian peasant bread
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 tbsp basil, chopped
- 2 tbsp chives, chopped
- 2 tbsp marjoram, chopped
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- sea salt and black pepper to taste

Heavily grill the bread and rub it with the garlic clove while it is still hot.

Combine the chopped herbs with the olive oil and mix well. Season to taste and spread this mixture onto the bread.



Dad's parenting style tied to child's weight

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - Preschool age children may be more likely to have a higher body mass index, an indicator of being overweight or obese, when their fathers are either permissive or disengaged as parents, study findings suggest.

A sampling of 4- to 5-year-old Australian children revealed that their risk of having a higher BMI increased by 59 percent if their father was a permissive, as opposed to an authoritative, parent.

Disengaged dads upped this risk by 35 percent, report Dr. Melissa Wake, of Royal Children's Hospital, Victoria, Australia, and colleagues.

By contrast, they found no similar association between the mothers' parenting style and their preschooler's weight, the investigators report in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Wake and colleagues determined parenting styles of the fathers and mothers of 4,934 boys and girls who were part of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children. Overall, about

15 percent of the children were overweight and 5 percent were obese.

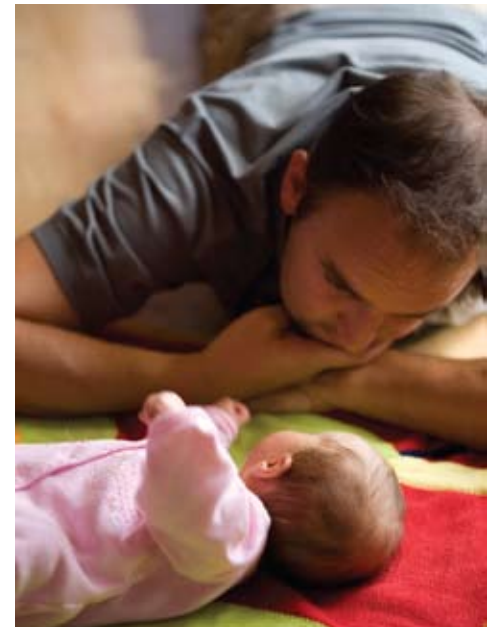
Through responses to questionnaires and in-person interviews, the investigators categorized the fathers and mothers as having one of four parenting styles.

Those with low warmth and high control were authoritarian, while the parents with high levels of warmth but low control were considered permissive, and those with low levels of both warmth and control were disengaged. These three styles were compared against the authoritative group, those showing high levels of warmth and control.

The researchers found that greater paternal control was strongly associated with a decreased likelihood of the child having a higher BMI. This association was evident when adjusting for the different parenting styles and controlling for variables, including the child's gender, language, number of siblings, whether they lived with one or both parents, and their parents education level

and weight.

Summing up, the researchers remind parents that warm, firm, and authoritative parenting is known to be associated with the best child outcomes.



Health

Small Lifestyle Changes Can Boost Longevity

Not smoking, exercising, moderate drinking, eating veggies could add 14 years, study says

(HealthDay News) -- People with four healthy lifestyle behaviors, not smoking, physical activity, moderate alcohol consumption, and eating five servings of fruit or vegetables a day, live an average of 14 years longer than people with none of those behaviors, a new British study contends.

Researchers at the University of Cambridge and the Medical Research Council looked at 20,000 men and women, aged 45-79, who filled out a questionnaire about the four health behaviors. The participants, none of whom had known cancer or heart or circulatory disease, filled out the questionnaire between 1993 and 1997 and were followed until 2006.

For each of the four healthy lifestyle behaviors, a participant received one point.

After they factored in age, the researchers found that participants with zero points were four times more likely to have died over an average period of 11 years than those with four points.



In addition, the study authors concluded that participants with a score of zero had the same risk of dying as someone 14 years older with a score of four. This was independent of body-mass index (BMI) and social class.

While the findings need to be confirmed in other populations and an analysis of how these combined health behaviors affect quality of life is needed, the researchers said the results suggest that these four healthy lifestyle behaviors could markedly improve the health of middle-aged and older people.

The study is part of the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC), conducted in 10 European countries. EPIC is the largest-ever study of diet and health.

There is strong evidence that individual lifestyle factors such as smoking, diet and physical activity influence health and longevity, but there has been little research into their combined impact, according to background information in a news release about the study.