Short Bouts of Movement Linked With Lower Risk of Death

Brief periods of incidental activity—non-exercise movement lasting less than 10 minutes that people engage in as a part of their typical day—were tied to a lower risk of all-cause mortality and major adverse cardiovascular events, according to an analysis of accelerometer data. The study included 103,684 White British participants from the UK Biobank who did not report exercising during their leisure time.

Moreover, the health benefits linked with intermittent bouts of moderate to vigorous intensity were similar for participants who moved for periods of 1 to 5 minutes and those who moved for 5 to 10 minutes. Activities that lasted for less than 1 minute were also associated with a lower risk of major adverse cardiovascular events, but only when about 15% of those brief activities consisted of vigorous movement, the researchers reported in The Lancet Public Health.

"The idea of accruing short bouts of moderate to vigorous activity through daily living activities makes physical activity much more accessible to people who are unwilling or unable to take part in structured exercise," study author Matthew Ahmadi, PhD, said in a statement. — Emily Harris

Published Online: October 18, 2023.

Note: Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.