

January 20th, 2010

In a study of over 19,000 men, cardiorespiratory fitness significantly decreased risk of death compared to those who were unfit. Over the 17 years of the study, men with metabolic syndrome who were fit had half the death rate compared to men with metabolic syndrome who were not fit.

FITNESS REDUCES THE RISK OF DEATH IN MEN WITH METABOLIC SYNDROME

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of disorders that include abdominal obesity, high blood pressure, elevated blood sugar, and unhealthy cholesterol levels. Up to one in four U.S. adults has metabolic syndrome, significantly increasing their risk for diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

In a study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine, over 19,000 men were recruited to determine the relationship between cardiorespiratory fitness (CRF) and mortality risk in healthy men and those with metabolic syndrome. The study group, which included 3,757 men with metabolic syndrome, were evaluated for fitness and then followed for up to 17 years.

Healthy men who were out of shape at the beginning of the study were three times as likely as their fit peers to die of cardiovascular disease. While men with metabolic syndrome were 89 percent more likely than healthy men to die of heart disease, men with metabolic syndrome who were unfit had twice the death rate as their fit counterparts.

According to the researchers, "This study strengthens the argument for aggressive public health campaigns aimed at increasing physical activity levels." Fitness, regardless of body weight, can provide a strong protective effect against premature death in both healthy men and men with metabolic syndrome.

< Arch Intern Med 2004 May 24;164(10):1092-7. >