

No time to exercise? Do it on the weekend! New research says it's okay

(From May 2017 newsletter)

In the past, experts warned about being a Weekend (exercise) Warrior. The concern was that high energy exercise only one or two days a week with many inactive days in between could increase the risk for heart attacks and injuries. New research counters this however. A study published earlier this year shows that intense weekend exercise bouts may lower the risk of premature death from cancer, heart disease or any cause.

The current recommendation is to accumulate 150 minutes of moderate activity over five or more days a week. Weekend warriors compress all their exercise into one – two high intensity bouts each week. This study looked at links between both “Weekend Warrior” style exercise and other physical activity patterns with risks of cardiovascular, cancer and “all cause” deaths.

The results showed that risk from death from any cause was 30 percent lower for weekend warriors and for people spread their activity out than for inactive people. The same held true for cancer and heart disease mortality. Any amount and pattern of activity linked to a lower risk of dying from these diseases compared to inactive.

The researchers analyzed data from 63,591 men and women in England and Scotland who took health surveys between 1994 and 2004. All respondents were aged 40 or older, with an average age of 59.

Most Americans do not get enough physical activity to enhance health, and prolong life. For time-crunched people, being able to compress exercise into one or two days a week may make getting enough physical activity more possible.

The study was published in JAMA Internal Medicine in March 2017.

Source: [JAMA Intern Med. 2017;177\(3\):335-342.doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.8014](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.8014)