

You Can Run, But Sitting May Still Increase the Risk for Cardiovascular Disease

You may be a beast in the gym or on the track, but if you spend a lot of time sitting, you still may be at increased risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other diseases. That's the word from the American Heart Association, which has published a scientific statement about the dangers of too much sedentary time.

"Regardless of how much physical activity someone gets, prolonged sedentary time could negatively impact the health of your heart and blood vessels," said Deborah Rohm Young, chair of the new scientific statement published in the American Heart Association journal, *Circulation*. "We don't have information about how much sedentary behavior is bad for health," she said. "The best advice at this time is to 'sit less and move more.'"

Physical activity and sedentary time

The authors say people should try to exercise 30 minutes or so a day to achieve the AHA's guideline of 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise per week. But, they said, this amount of exercise doesn't necessarily offset the unhealthy effects of prolonged sitting. Researchers should explore the issue further, the authors said, but the statement was issued to emphasize the dangers of spending too much time in your chair. "It's too early to make conclusive recommendations other than to encourage Americans to 'sit less, move more,'" said Young.

Sedentary activities are generally thought of as time when a person is sitting or lying down. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers guidelines for how much physical activity a person needs. Adults 18 to 64, the agency says, should get one of the three options below:

- Two hours and 30 minutes each week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, and on at least two days a week, muscle-strengthening exercises that work the legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms
- One hour and 15 minutes each week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, such as running, and on two or more days a week, muscle-strengthening activities that work all the major muscle groups listed above
- An equivalent mix of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity and two days a week of muscle-strengthening exercises as listed above

To explore further

The American Heart Association statement, "[Sedentary time may raise heart disease risk – sit less, move more,](#)" is available on the association's website. The CDC's page, "[Physical Activity Basics,](#)" leads to information about the recommended levels of activity for adults, children, seniors and pregnant or postpartum women. The CDC previously compiled statistics on the "[Prevalence of Sedentary Leisure-time Behavior Among Adults in the United States.](#)" Talk to a fitness professional about ways to keep up your physical activity and limit your sedentary time.

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