

[IMAGE]

Make Time for Cardio

By Editorial Staff

Whether you're young, old or any age in between, cardiovascular exercise - any activity that makes the heart work harder for a prolonged period of time, thus making it stronger - is a great way to protect against heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular-related conditions. But did you know that cardio has other health benefits?

For example, a study published recently in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* suggests cardiovascular fitness is "positively associated" with intelligence in teens. According to the study authors, "Cardiovascular fitness changes between age 15 and 18 [years] predicted cognitive performance at 18 [years]."

woman running - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Another study, this one published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, emphasizes that because men and women tend to experience an accelerated drop in their cardiorespiratory fitness (CRF) after the age of 45, it's important to participate in cardio as a means to maintain fitness and avoid the negative health consequences. The study authors specifically note that the decrease in CRF may affect older adults in terms of their ability to "function independently" and also state that "low CRF levels increase the risk of diseases."

Heart health is vital at any age, and cardiovascular exercise is a great way to ensure a strong, healthy heart for a lifetime. And as the above studies suggest, heart health isn't the only reason to do it. Keep in mind that while you can get a great cardio workout at a gym with a treadmill or an exercise bike, you can also do something as simple as run up and down the stairs or jump rope at home. Ask your doctor for other suggestions on how you can get a great cardio workout today and every day.

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