

[IMAGE]

Not Fit? You Might as Well Be a Smoker

By Editorial Staff

A recent study expands on a concept put forth a few years ago regarding physical activity: lack of it can be just as dangerous as smoking when it comes to your health. "Sitting is the new smoking" was an oft-repeated phrase in health care and the workplace, but it may be supplanted by an even more encompassing phrase: "Being out of shape is the new smoking."

In the study in question, researchers measured maximum oxygen intake (aerobic capacity – a measure of physical fitness) in nearly 800 men beginning way back in 1967 and measured about once every decade for more than 35 years, until 2012. Men averaged 50 years of age at study inception and were tracked for the entire study period (or as long as they lived).

Results were significant when comparing men based on low, medium or high aerobic capacity: Men with the lowest aerobic capacity were 21 percent more likely to die prematurely compared with men with medium aerobic capacity and 42 percent more at risk compared to men with the highest / best aerobic capacity.

Don't smoke? Great. Don't exercise? You might as well be a smoker when it comes to the health risk. If you're struggling to lose weight, get in shape or otherwise maximize your fitness level (and hopefully, your aerobic capacity), talk to your doctor for tips on how to do it the right way.

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