

[IMAGE]

Move It or Lose It (Your Life)

By Editorial Staff

Think you can sit at your desk or on the couch all day and counteract it with exercise? Think again. Even people who exercise are putting their health – in fact, their lives – at risk by not moving enough, and it may not be a simple question of sitting too much.

In a study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, researchers evaluated sedentary time for one week by requiring that study participants wear accelerometers, which tracked activity levels. They then grouped participants based on activity, generating four groups. Members of the least sedentary group spent about 11 hours sitting and standing, while the most sedentary spent about 13 hours sitting / standing. Researchers also grouped participants based on how frequently they took movement breaks, which ranged from every 7.7 minutes to 12.4 minutes or longer.

sitting - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark People who remained sedentary for the longest amount of time per day and sat the longest without moving were twice as likely to die during the four-year tracking period compared to the least sedentary people who also took movement breaks the most often. The study didn't say that lack of movement caused death, but that people who didn't move enough were more likely to die. Of course, we all know ample research connects exercise / movement with longevity, so although no direct association could be made, it's easy to speculate that not moving could have the opposite effect.

It's important to note that the accelerometers worn by the study participants couldn't differentiate between sitting vs. standing. That's a critical point because increasingly, health experts suggest desk-sitters stand for greater portions of their workday. That's good advice, but it might not be enough, as this study emphasizes. *Movement* is what truly matters, not merely a change in position. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

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