

[IMAGE]

Move More! Avoiding the Health Dangers of Inactivity

By Malik Slosberg, DC, MS

In addition to the well-documented and alarming increase in obesity, recent studies have also documented the startling lack of physical activity in our society. Researchers have found that physical activity declines dramatically across age groups between childhood and adolescence and continues to decline with age.

Among children, 42 percent obtain the recommended 60 minutes per day of physical activity, but only 8 percent of adolescents achieve this goal. Among adults, adherence to the recommendation to obtain 30 minutes day of physical activity is less than 5 percent!

This reduced physical activity results in numerous changes commonly referred to as the deconditioning syndrome. In an excellent 2011 review paper on the dangers of inactivity, the authors describe deconditioning as the physiologic response of the body when there is a reduction in energy use or exercise levels; that is, with bed rest, prolonged sitting or in living a very sedentary lifestyle. Major changes included in this syndrome are:

- Decreased joint mobilization
- Wasting of trunk muscles
- Decreased muscular strength and endurance
- Reduced cardiovascular fitness
- Stiffness of ligaments and joints
- Reduced metabolic activity
- Increased susceptibility to sprains, strains and muscle spasms

exercise - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark These damaging effects of muscle and joint disuse provoke symptoms, causing greater avoidance of activity, resulting in a cyclical pattern of pain and avoidance of activity / deconditioning / more pain, and is considered a defining characteristic of chronic low back pain patients.

Studies published from several different countries show that the majority of adult waking hours (>90 percent) are spent either in sedentary or in light-intensity activity. A number of studies, using both

subjective and objective measures of physical activity, suggest that prolonged bouts of sitting time are strongly associated with chronic disease including: obesity, abnormal glucose metabolism, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease risk and cancer, *independent of whether adults meet physical activity guidelines*.

So, what's the bottom line? Move more! And keep in mind that your chiropractor is your partner in the battle against obesity and related health conditions. If you or someone you know is struggling with their weight and/or living a sedentary lifestyle, ask for help. Your chiropractor can help develop a strategy to improve your/their health via exercise, diet and other methods.

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