

[IMAGE]

Fitness To Lower Dementia Risk

If you are looking to lower the risk of dementia in old age, start moving and getting fit. According to a new study, this is the best way to avoid dementia.

Between 1971 and 2009, 19,458 healthy adults younger than age 65 took a treadmill fitness test as part of a broader health examination. Researchers followed the subjects through their Medicare records for an average of 24 years.

After adjusting for age, smoking, diabetes, cholesterol and other health factors, the researchers found that compared with those in the lowest 20 percent for fitness in midlife, those in the highest 20 percent had a 36 percent reduced risk of dementia.

The study population was largely white and highly educated, and the researchers acknowledge that their findings, published last week in *The Annals of Internal Medicine*, cannot be generalized to other populations. They emphasize that the study is observational and does not prove causation.

Fitness has also been a good way to keep your brain in good shape in midlife by activating countless neurons, which generate, receive and interpret repeated, rapid-fire messages from the nervous system, coordinating muscle contractions, vision, balance, organ function and all of the complex interactions of bodily systems that allow you to take one step, then another.

If you are looking to keep your brain in good shape, get moving and it will pay off later in life!

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