

[IMAGE]

Do Fit Kids Have Fit Bowels?

By Editorial Staff

The gut microbiome is increasingly being revealed as essential to our GI and overall health. Unfortunately, that revelation comes courtesy of the increasing number of people suffering from GI / whole-body health issues due to microbiome dysfunction. Could that dysfunction start as early as childhood – and could cardio fitness help prevent it? Let's see what new research suggests when it comes to a common gastrointestinal malady: inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), which has been linked to gut microbial dysfunction.

IBD can manifest as one of two conditions: Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, and trust us, you don't want anyone to experience either one. Among nearly 1.4 million 10-year-old students who completed physical fitness tests, the six-year cumulative incidence of IBD was lowest among students who performed best on tests of cardiorespiratory endurance (time to complete an 800-meter run), musculoskeletal endurance (bent-leg curl-ups performed in one minute) and musculoskeletal power (distance on standing broad jump). When adjusting for potential confounding variables (other reasons why a student could have a higher or lower risk of IBD, cardiorespiratory fitness proved to be associated with IBD risk to a clinically significant degree.

bowel - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark The study authors offer two potential explanations for the relationship between cardio fitness [CE] and IBD: "First, better physical fitness, especially aerobic fitness, has been shown to be associated with reduced chronic inflammation in the bowel. Based on animal experiments, exercise inhibits local proinflammatory responses, reducing inflammatory cytokines and apoptotic protein expression. Second, better CE may be associated with reduced IBD risk via modulation of the gut microbiome."

Of course, cardio fitness offers numerous other health benefits, but now we can add reduced risk of inflammatory bowel disease to the list! If you know someone with IBD (or suffer from it yourself), you know you would never wish it on anyone else, particularly a child. Just another reason to make cardiorespiratory fitness a priority in every person's health and wellness routine, from young to old.

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