

[IMAGE]

All for One and One for All

Almost 50 million Americans suffer from high blood pressure (BP), and cardiovascular disease has been the primary cause of death in the U.S. for over 80 years. Studies show that reducing BP reduces risk for heart disease and death, even when lowered by only a small amount. Medications have been shown to lower risk for cardiovascular disease, but because they may have dangerous side effects, aerobic exercise alone can be prescribed to lower BP.

To find out if exercise can reduce BP in all groups of people, the authors of a recent review in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* examined the results of more than 50 previous studies. They combined the results of these studies (involving a total of about 2,500 individuals) to determine the effectiveness of exercise to reduce BP in various groups, and to determine if specific types of exercise are more effective than others.

Any form of aerobic exercise significantly reduced BP in every type of previously sedentary person, regardless of race, gender, weight, and presence of hypertension (high BP). Frequency and intensity of exercise also did not appear to significantly affect BP.

Even a small decrease in average BP can dramatically lower your risk for cardiovascular disease and death. Whether or not you currently have high blood pressure, maintain a consistent regimen of aerobic exercise to ward off disease, premature death, and obesity.

Reference:

Whelton SP, Chin A, Xin X, et al. Effect of aerobic exercise on blood pressure: A meta-analysis of randomized, controlled trials. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 2002;136(7), pp. 493-503.

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