

[IMAGE]

## Be Low-Fat and Fit

Adult physical activity levels remain low, even as obesity rates continue to soar. Both of these factors lead to an increased risk for many forms of cancer later in life. Exactly how does each of these traits affect risk for cancer deaths?

Researchers recently evaluated the effects of cardiorespiratory fitness and obesity on all forms of cancer for approximately 5,500 men and women. In the study, appearing in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, cardiorespiratory fitness (based on heart rate produced during a treadmill test) and body mass index (or BMI, calculated from weight and height measurements) were recorded between 1972-1976; participants were followed until 1998 to determine cancer deaths.

Men who had the best cardiovascular fitness based on treadmill tests were 53% less likely to die from cancer than the least-fit men, while obese women with the highest BMI were 1.5 times more likely to die from some form of cancer than other women. Body weight had no effect on cancer risk in men, however, and fitness did not significantly affect women's risk for cancer.

Men with low fitness levels and obese women may have significantly increased risks for multiple forms of cancer. Nonetheless, both men and women should maintain a healthy body weight *and* cardiovascular fitness, as many studies have shown the benefits of each for either gender. Your chiropractor can help you put together the best fitness program to meet your individual needs.

### *Reference:*

Evenson KR, Stevens J, et al. The effect of cardiorespiratory fitness and obesity on cancer mortality in women and men. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* 2003;35(2), pp. 270-277.

Other studies on sports and fitness can be found at <http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/sports>.

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