[IMAGE]

Regular Walking Reduces Risk of Cardiovascular Disease

Regular exercise is essential to good health. While it is unclear as to which exercises provide the most benefits, the Centers for Disease Control recommends that 30 minutes of "moderate intensity" physical activity, performed most days of the week, will lead to a wide range of health benefits. This is especially important for inactive or "sedentary" people, who may be at increased risk of cardiovascular disease and other disorders.

In this study, nearly 500 inactive adults were randomized to one of five groups. In four of the groups, patients were asked to walk 30 minutes per day, in sessions of 10 minutes or longer, at various levels of intensity and duration. In the fifth group, patients received advice from a doctor and written materials on exercise. All of the patients were monitored for 24 months for changes in oxygen and cholesterol levels.

At six months, patients in three of the walking groups (moderate intensity/high frequency, hard intensity/low frequency and hard intensity/high frequency) showed "significant increases" in oxygen consumption compared to the group that received advice only; people in the hard intensity/high frequency group also showed "significant improvements" in total cholesterol levels. These improvements were still apparent at the end of the study period.

Walking is one of the easiest ways for a sedentary person to become more physically active. It can be performed at any time, in a variety of environments, and is extremely cost-effective. Talk to your doctor of chiropractic about setting up an exercise plan that includes walking along with other types of activities to help improve your overall fitness level. For more information, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/sports/exercise/index.html.

Duncan GE, Anton SD, Sydeman SJ, et al. Prescribing exercise at varied levels of intensity and frequency. A randomized trial. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, Nov. 14, 2005;165:2362-2369.

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