

Recent, vigorous exercise is associated with reduced breast cancer risk

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Post-menopausal women who engage in moderate to vigorous exercise have a reduced risk of breast cancer. This comes from researchers writing the open access journal *BMC Cancer* who investigated the link between breast cancer and exercise.

"With an estimated 182,460 new cases diagnosed in the United States in 2008, breast cancer is recognized as the most common cancer affecting U.S. women" says Dr. Tricia M Peters from the U.S. National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Maryland, who headed up an international team of researchers. Vigorous [exercise](#) has been hypothesized to reduce cancer risk for some time. However, this new study is one of the first prospective investigations to look at the importance of various intensities of exercise at different stages in an individual's life.

Over 110,000 post menopausal women were asked to rate their level of physical activity at ages 15-18, 19-29, 35-39, and in the past 10 years. It was found, over 6.6 years of follow up, that women who engaged in more than 7 hours per week of moderate-to-vigorous exercise for the last ten years were 16% less likely to develop breast cancer than those who were inactive. However, no link was observed between breast cancer risk and physical activity in [women](#) who were active at a younger age.

Dr. Peters concludes, "Our findings could help inform the mechanisms of the physical activity-breast cancer relationship. With breast cancer still claiming so many lives, all the information of potential preventive measures we can get is vital".

Intensity and timing of [physical activity](#) in relation to postmenopausal [breast cancer](#) risk: the prospective NIH-AARP Diet and Health Study, Tricia M Peters, Steven C Moore, Gretchen L Gierach, Nicholas J Wareham, Ulf Ekelund, Albert R Hollenbeck, Arthur Schatzkin and Michael F Leitzmann, *BMC Cancer* (in press), www.biomedcentral.com/bmccancer/

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