

# Fidgeting your way to fitness

June 28 2011

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Walking to the photocopier and fidgeting at your desk are contributing more to your cardiorespiratory fitness than you might think.

Researchers have found that both the duration and intensity of incidental physical activities (IPA) are associated with cardiorespiratory fitness. The intensity of the activity seems to be particularly important, with a cumulative 30-minute increase in [moderate physical activity](#) throughout the day offering significant benefits for fitness and [long-term health](#).

"It's encouraging to know that if we just increase our incidental activity slightly--a little bit more work around the house, or walking down the hall to speak with a co-worker as opposed to sending an email--we can really benefit our health in the long-term," says Ashlee McGuire, the study's lead researcher and a graduate student in the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies. "Best of all, these activities don't take up a lot of time, they're not difficult to do, and you don't have to go to a gym."

Ms McGuire and fellow researcher Robert Ross, a professor in the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, define IPA as non-purposeful physical activity accrued through activities of daily living, such as doing housework, climbing stairs or walking around the office.

Since a large proportion of the Canadian population doesn't participate in a more structured, higher intensity exercise regime, Ms McGuire and Dr. Ross wanted to find out whether the time and intensity of incidental physical activity had any impact on cardiorespiratory fitness.

None of the study's participants met Canada's [physical activity guidelines](#) and were engaging solely in incidental [physical activity](#). Activity levels were gauged using an accelerometer, which measures the duration and intensity of movement. Participants wore the [accelerometer](#) for a week and also took part in a test to measure their cardiorespiratory [fitness](#).

These findings were recently published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, the journal of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Provided by Queen's University

Citation: Fidgeting your way to fitness (2011, June 28) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-06-fidgeting.html>

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