

Cycling fast: vigorous daily exercise recommended for a longer life

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A study conducted among cyclists in Copenhagen, Denmark¹ showed that it is the relative intensity and not the duration of cycling which is of most importance in relation to all-cause mortality and even more pronounced for coronary heart disease mortality. The study presented today at the ESC Congress 2011, concluded that men with fast intensity cycling survived 5.3 years longer, and men with average intensity 2.9 years longer than men with slow cycling intensity. For women the figures were 3.9 and 2.2 years longer, respectively (see Figures below). The groups were adjusted for differences in age and conventional risk factor levels.

Current recommendations prescribe that every adult should accumulate 30 minutes or more of [moderate physical activity](#) in leisure time, preferably every day of the week. The optimal intensity, duration and frequency still have to be established.

According to Prof Schnor, "this study suggests that a greater part of the daily physical activity in leisure time should be vigorous, based on the individuals own perception of intensity. "Our group has already published similar results for all-cause mortality in relation to walking."²

The following tables show hazard ratios for all-cause and [coronary heart disease](#) death in relation to duration and intensity of cycling adjusted for age, gender, number of other sports activities, BMI, [systolic blood pressure](#) (including antihypertensive medication), HDL-cholesterol, smoking, income, alcohol-intake and diabetes. Within all three duration

groups, there was an inverse association between cycling intensity and all-cause mortality, this was even more pronounced for coronary heart disease.

Provided by European Society of Cardiology

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