

Active lifestyle in elderly keeps their brains running

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(Medical Xpress) -- New research from Uppsala University, Sweden, suggests that an active lifestyle in late life protects grey matter and cognitive functions in humans. The findings are now published in the scientific journal *Neurobiology of Aging*.

In a new study, a multidisciplinary research team from the Uppsala University has systematically studied 331 men and women at the age of 75 years. The researchers examined whether an active lifestyle is tied to [brain health](#) in seniors living in Uppsala, Sweden. The [brain structure](#) of each participant was measured using magnetic imaging technology, so-called MRT, and various memory tests were administered in order to monitor the seniors' cognitive status.

“We found that those elderly who reported to be more active in daily routine had larger grey and white matter and showed better performances on various memory tests, compared to those who had a sedentary lifestyle. Interestingly, active elderly had also more [grey matter](#) in the precuneus, a brain region that typically shrinks at the beginning of Alzheimer's disease. Our findings suggest that an active lifestyle is a promising strategy for counteracting cognitive aging late in life,” says Christian Benedict.

The data for the study were taken from the major epidemiological study Prospective Investigation of the Vasculature in Uppsala Seniors (PIVUS). www.medsci.uu.se/pivus/pivus.htm

More information: Benedict C et al., Association between physical activity and brain health in older adults, *Neurobiology of Aging*, in press. [www.sciencedirect.com/science/ ... ii/S0197458012002618](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/.../S0197458012002618)

Provided by Uppsala University

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