

Inactive women may face higher risk for cervical cancer

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(HealthDay)—Women who are sedentary appear more likely to develop

cervical cancer, but just 30 minutes of exercise each week might significantly reduce that risk, new research suggests.

"We think that this study sends a powerful public health message: that a complete lack of exercise is associated with the greater likelihood of developing a serious disease," said senior study author Kirsten Moysich. She is a distinguished professor of oncology in the department of [cancer prevention](#) and control at Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, N.Y.

"Our findings show that any amount of exercise can reduce cervical cancer risk," Moysich said in a Roswell release.

According to study author Dr. J. Brian Szender, the researchers believe that "this is the first U.S.-based study looking at the associations between [physical inactivity](#) and cervical cancer." Szender is a fellow in the department of gynecologic oncology at Roswell.

"Our findings suggest that abstinence from [regular physical activity](#) is associated with increased odds of cervical cancer," he added, although a cause-and-effect link was not proven.

The study involved 128 women diagnosed with cervical cancer, as well as 512 women who were suspected of having cervical cancer but ultimately were found not to have the disease.

Of those diagnosed with cervical cancer, 31 percent of the women reported being inactive. In this study, physical inactivity was defined as exercising less than four times a month.

Even after the researchers considered other risk factors—such as smoking, alcohol intake, family history of cervical cancer and body mass index—these women were 2.5 times more likely to develop cervical cancer than women who exercised, the findings showed.

Meanwhile, 26 percent of the [women](#) who had been suspected of having [cervical cancer](#) reported being inactive, the investigators found.

"In addition to smoking cessation and undergoing regular screening, we have identified another important modifiable risk factor for this disease," Moysich said.

The findings were published in the May issue of the *Journal of Lower Genital Tract Disease*.

More information: The American Cancer Society has more about [cervical cancer](#).

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