

Could exercise help you learn new language?

February 23 2017, by David Copland



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Understanding how exercise affects language learning could help patients with brain conditions such as stroke, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

A trial by University of Queensland researchers will examine the effects

of exercise on [language learning](#) in healthy older adults.

The study, led by UQ's School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences researcher Professor David Copland is looking to recruit 75 participants aged between 60 and 85 years old who have English as their primary language.

"Exercise is known to be important for maintaining and improving cognition in late adulthood," Professor Copland said.

"We're interested in working out what types of exercise are best for improving learning.

"By recruiting healthy older adults, our goal is to translate our findings to clinical populations of the same age.

"Understanding how exercise affects language learning could eventually lead to the development of new approaches to improve language re-learning in people with brain conditions such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and following a stroke."

The study is being conducted at UQ's St Lucia campus in Brisbane, with participants attending three visits across two weeks.

The sessions will include a cognitive assessment, a fitness assessment, a single bout of either stretching, moderate-intensity cycling or high-intensity cycling, three [blood samples](#), and a short language task.

Each participant will receive a free fitness assessment conducted by an accredited [exercise physiologist](#).

"It's believed that the body responds to one session of [exercise](#) by inducing changes in the blood, changes that are thought to increase the

brain's capacity to learn," Professor Copland said.

"In order to assess these changes, a certified phlebotomist will take blood samples at different time points.

"After exercising, participants will be asked to complete a task that consists of learning new words."

Provided by University of Queensland

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