

Mindfulness program may help increase physical activity levels

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(HealthDay)—A meditation and stress reduction program may be as

effective as structured exercise programs for increasing physical activity, according to a study published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*.

Jacob D. Meyer, Ph.D., from Iowa State University in Ames, and colleagues compared the effects of eight weeks of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), aerobic [exercise](#) training (AET), and no treatment (control group) during the fall season on moderate-to-vigorous physical activities (MVPA) in healthy adults measured by an Actigraph GT3X+ accelerometer.

Based on data from 49 participants (18 MBSR, 14 AET, 17 control), the researchers found that daily MVPA decreased significantly in all groups from pre-randomization to post-intervention (decreases of 17.9, 5.7, and 7.4 minutes/day for control, MBSR, and AET, respectively), but there were no significant differences between the groups. Bouts of MVPA (≥ 10 minutes) decreased in control and in MBSR (77.3 and 15.5 minutes/week, respectively; between-group difference: $P = 0.08$), while it increased in AET (5.7 minutes/week; compared to control: $P = 0.029$ and compared to MBSR: $P = 0.564$).

"Structured exercise training is something as a field we have used for decades to improve physical activity and physical health," Meyer said in a statement. "To see a similar effect on [physical activity](#) from an intervention that focuses on the way someone thinks or perceives the world was completely unexpected."

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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