High physical activity levels tied to coronary artery calcification

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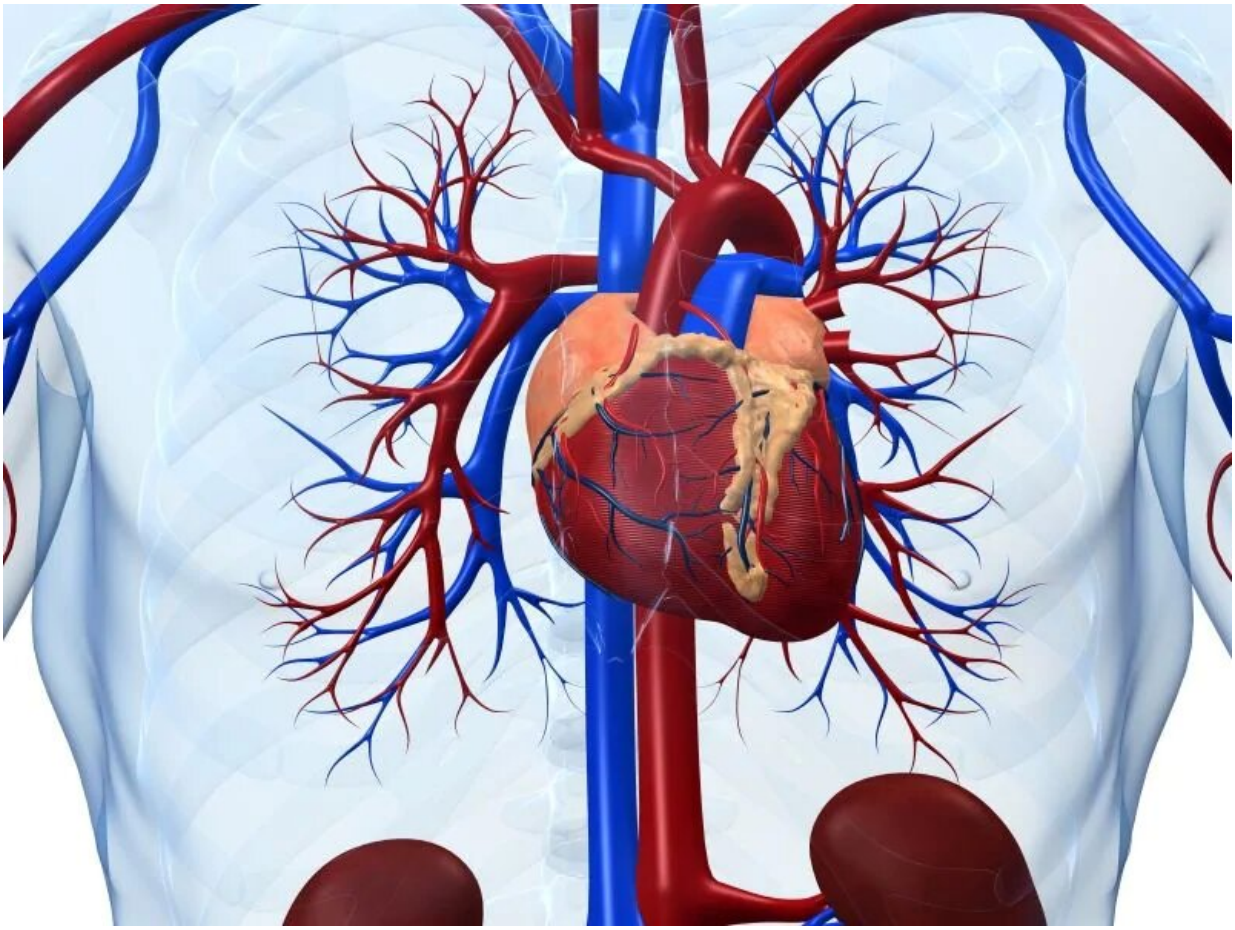

(HealthDay)—High levels of physical activity correlate with prevalent

coronary artery calcification (CAC) but are not linked to increased mortality, according to a study published online Jan. 30 in *JAMA Cardiology*.

Laura F. DeFina, M.D., from The Cooper Institute in Dallas, and colleagues evaluated data for generally healthy men without prevalent cardiovascular disease (CVD) to examine the correlation between high levels of physical activity and prevalent CAC and subsequent mortality risk.

The researchers found that compared with men accumulating less physical activity, those with at least 3,000 metabolic equivalent of task (MET)-minutes/week (min/week) were more likely to have prevalent CAC of at least 100 Agatston units (AU) (relative risk, 1.11; 95 percent confidence interval, 1.03 to 1.20). After a mean follow-up of 10.4 years, there were 759 and 180 all-cause and CVD deaths, including 40 and 10, respectively, among those with physical activity of a least 3,000 MET-min/week. The likelihood of dying was significantly lower for men with CAC of less than 100 AU and physical activity of at least 3,000 MET-min/week versus those with less than 1,500 MET-min/week (hazard ratio, 0.52; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.29 to 0.91); for men with CAC of at least 100 AU, there was no significant increase in mortality for men with at least 3,000 MET-min/week versus less than 1,500 MET-min/week (hazard ratio, 0.77; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.52 to 1.15).

"Our findings should reassure patients and their health care professionals that it appears these highly active individuals can safely continue their exercise programs," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: Abstract/Full Text

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