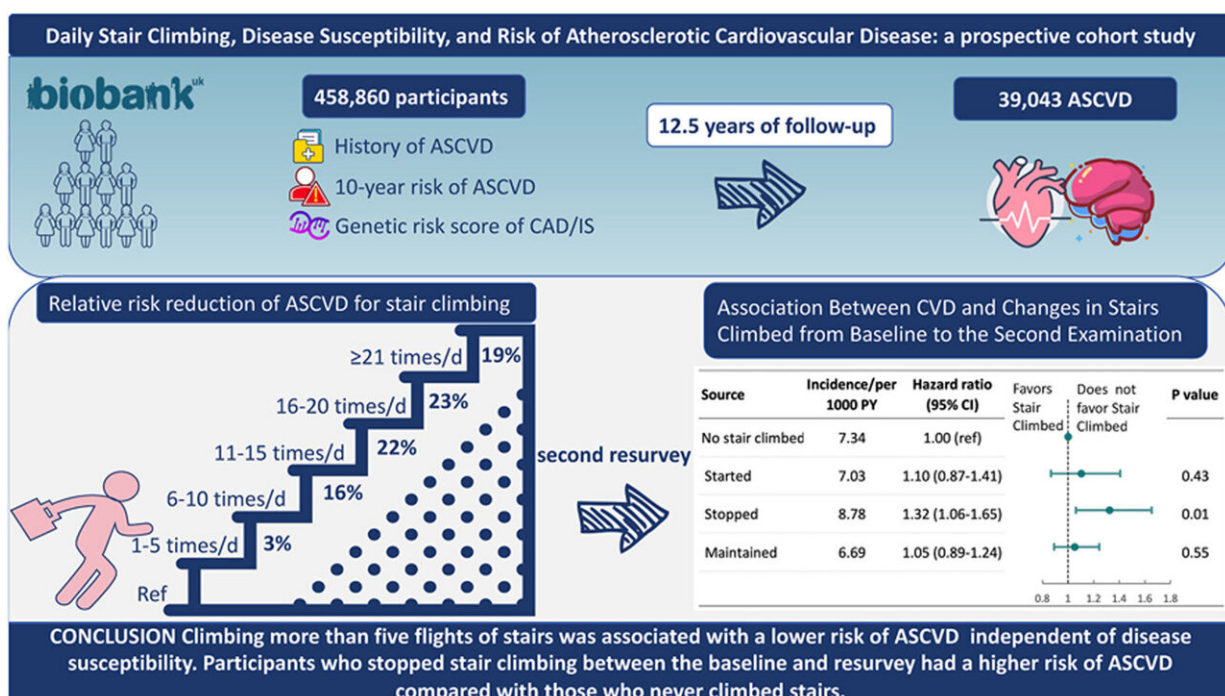


# Walking more than five flights of stairs a day can cut risk of heart disease by 20%, study says

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Credit: *Atherosclerosis* (2023). DOI: 10.1016/j.atherosclerosis.2023.117300

Forget walking 10,000 steps a day. Taking at least 50 steps climbing stairs each day could significantly slash your risk of heart disease, according to a new study from Tulane University.

[The study](#), published in *Atherosclerosis*, found that climbing more than five flights of stairs daily could reduce risk of [cardiovascular disease](#) by 20%.

Atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD) along with [coronary artery disease](#) and stroke are the leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide.

"Short bursts of high-intensity stair climbing are a time-efficient way to improve cardiorespiratory fitness and lipid profile, especially among those unable to achieve the current physical activity recommendations," said co-corresponding author Dr. Lu Qi, HCA Regents Distinguished Chair and professor at the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. "These findings highlight the potential advantages of stair climbing as a primary preventive measure for ASCVD in the general population."

Using UK Biobank data collected from 450,000 adults, the study calculated participants' susceptibility to cardiovascular disease based on [family history](#), established [risk factors](#) and genetic risk factors and surveyed participants about their lifestyle habits and frequency of stair climbing. Median follow-up time was 12.5 years.

The study found that climbing more stairs daily especially reduced risk of cardiovascular disease in those who were less susceptible. However, Qi said the increased risk of heart disease in more susceptible people could be "effectively offset" by daily stair climbing.

Qi touted the public availability of [stairs](#) as a low-cost, accessible way to incorporate exercise into daily routines.

"This study provides novel evidence for the protective effects of stair climbing on the risk of ASCVD, particularly for individuals with

multiple ASCVD risk factors," Qi said.

**More information:** Zimin Song et al, Daily stair climbing, disease susceptibility, and risk of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease: A prospective cohort study, *Atherosclerosis* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.atherosclerosis.2023.117300](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.atherosclerosis.2023.117300)

Provided by Tulane University

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