

Study suggests nonagenarians are mostly sedentary, with low physical activity

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Nonagenarians are mostly sedentary and report low physical activity, according to a study published online Dec. 6 in *PLOS ONE*.

Sari Aaltonen, Ph.D., from the University of Helsinki, and colleagues examined how accelerometer characteristics associate with self-reported physical activity, anthropometric, sociodemographic, [health](#), and cognitive characteristics in a population-based cohort study involving 38 nonagenarians.

On average, participants took 2,931 steps and had 11 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity and 13.6 hours of sedentary time per day. Physical activity bouts less than three minutes/day and sedentary bouts of 20 to 60 minutes/day were observed most often.

The researchers identified positive correlations for many accelerometer-measured and self-reported physical activity characteristics. Associations were seen for low levels of many accelerometer-measured physical activity characteristics with low education, dizziness, and fear of falling. There was also an association seen for fear of falling with accelerometer-measured sedentary behavior characteristics.

"A clinically important finding was that most of the accelerometer-measured physical activity characteristics correlated significantly with self-reported [physical activity](#), indicating a good usability for many self-reported items in everyday settings," the authors write.

"Larger studies, including longitudinal aspects as well, can help in understanding the antecedents and underpinnings of both physical and [mental health](#) in this fast-growing understudied population segment."

More information: Sari Aaltonen et al, Accelerometer-measured physical activity and sedentary behavior in nonagenarians: Associations with self-reported physical activity, anthropometric, sociodemographic, health and cognitive characteristics, *PLOS ONE* (2023). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0294817](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0294817)

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