

# Daily active commuting may lower inflammation levels

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A new study, conducted by the University of Eastern Finland, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, shows that engaging in active commuting for a

minimum of 45 minutes a day was associated with lower levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a key marker of inflammation.

[The study](#) was published in the *European Journal of Public Health*.

Low-grade inflammation has been linked to multiple [chronic diseases](#), such as [cardiovascular disease](#), type 2 diabetes, and cancer. Prior research has shown that exercise can reduce low-grade inflammation. However, few studies have explored whether [active commuting](#), that is, walking or cycling to work, is associated with lower inflammation levels.

The recent study examined the link between commuting habits and inflammation in 6,208 middle-aged working adults. The study utilized cross-sectional data from the nationally representative FINRISK study from 1997, 2002, 2007, and 2012.

The key findings suggest that adults who walked or cycled to work for at least 45 minutes a day had lower CRP levels compared to those who commuted using car or other motorized vehicles. The association remained strong even after adjusting for key confounding factors, such as leisure-time [physical activity](#), occupational physical activity, and diet.

The subgroup analyses highlighted that the observed association was particularly noticeable in women. In [contrast](#), no associations were observed between shorter active commuting bouts (less than 45 minutes a day) and inflammation.

Lead author Sara Allaouat from the University of Eastern Finland commented on the significance of the findings: "Our study suggests that regular and somewhat high amount of active commuting may reduce inflammation among adults. Promoting walking and cycling to work can lead to population-level health benefits as well as reduced emissions from motorized traffic."

**More information:** Sara Allaouat et al, Association between active commuting and low-grade inflammation: a population-based cross-sectional study, *European Journal of Public Health* (2023). [DOI: 10.1093/eurpub/ckad213](https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckad213)

Provided by University of Eastern Finland

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