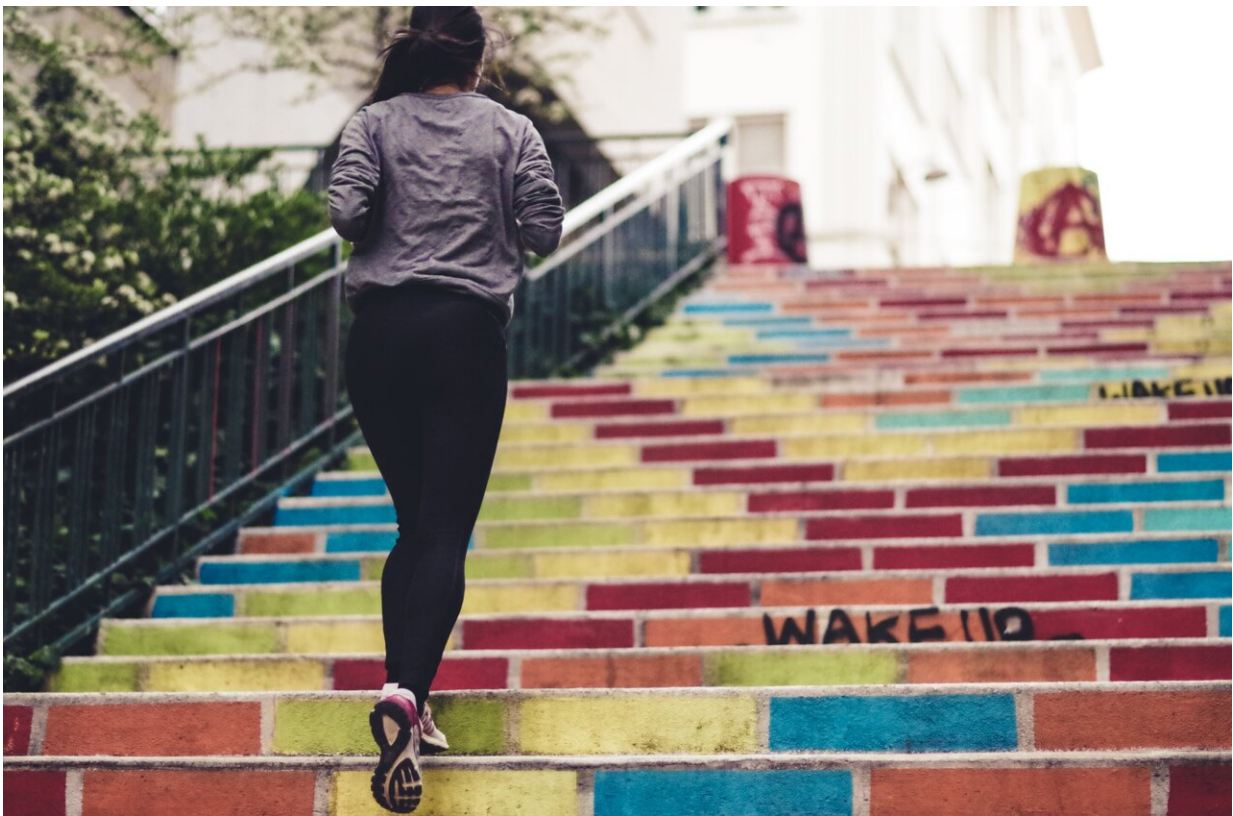


Whether you exercise regularly or one-to-two days a week, weight loss is possible, shows study

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Whether you engage in physical activity on a regular basis or one-to-two days a week, both options produce weight loss suggests a new study titled

"The Associations of 'Weekend Warrior' and Regularly Active Physical Activity with Abdominal and General Adiposity in U.S. Adults," published in the journal *Obesity*. The study is the first of its kind to examine the association between physical activity patterns and objectively measured fat tissue mass.

Guidelines from the World Health Organization recommend that adults perform at least 150 minutes per week of moderate [physical activity](#), 75 minutes per week of vigorous physical activity or an equivalent combination of both intensities. However, many individuals find it challenging to meet this recommendation due to physical activity being time-consuming in a fast-paced society.

The new study found that people defined by researchers as "weekend warriors"—individuals who condense their exercise into one-to-two days a week—can also lose weight similar to individuals who exercise on a regular basis as long as they achieve the recommended goals.

"The weekend warrior pattern is worth promoting in individuals who cannot meet the recommended frequency in current guidelines," said Lihua Zhang, health care scientist, Fuwai Hospital, National Center for Cardiovascular Diseases, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences and Peking Union Medical College, Beijing, China. Zhang is one of the corresponding authors of the study.

Zhang suggested that [office workers](#), bus drivers and other employees who have to sit for many hours during the workday care about the research. "Those people are struggling to catch up in their exercise plan in daily life to offset the hazard of a sedentary lifestyle but have less free time to get to the gym," she said.

"Our study could offer them an alternative choice to keep fit," said Zhang, who added that there are suitable activities for weekend warriors

such as climbing, hiking, cycling or running.

Researchers extracted data from more than 9,600 participants in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey from 2011 to 2018. Participants ranged in age from 20- to 59-years-old.

Abdominal and general adiposity were assessed by dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry (DXA)—a non-invasive and easily accessible body composition scan—and anthropometric measures. Physical activity levels were collected from the Global Physical Activity Questionnaire and classified as inactive, weekend warrior and regularly active. Survey linear regression models were used to assess associations between physical activity patterns and adiposity indicators.

Results showed that 772 participants reported the weekend warrior pattern and 3,277 reported the regularly active pattern. Compared to the 5,580 inactive participants, both the weekend warrior and regular active groups had lower DXA-measured abdominal adiposity, waist circumference, whole-body fat mass and body mass index. These two groups were also younger, more likely to be non-Hispanic white, have higher educational backgrounds, and less likely to be unemployed or to have hypertension or diabetes.

"On a high level, this study reaffirms the old adage about physical activity and health: any activity is better than no activity. Notably, the weekend warriors' workout was of higher intensity and longer duration, and more intensity and longer duration correlated with even lower abdominal fat. The main takeaway, though, is that people should be active in any manner that suits their lifestyle," said Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine Beverly Tchang, MD, DABOM, Comprehensive Weight Control Center, Weill Cornell Medicine in New York. Tchang was not associated with the research study.

Steven B. Heymsfield, MD, professor, Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Baton Rouge, La., who was also not associated with the study added, "Findings in a cross-sectional sample such as reported by the study's researchers need confirmation in prospective longitudinal studies."

More information: The Associations of 'Weekend Warrior' and Regularly Active Physical Activity with Abdominal and General Adiposity in U.S. Adults, *Obesity* (2024). [DOI: 10.1002/oby.23986](https://doi.org/10.1002/oby.23986). onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/oby.23986

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