

Both high and low intensity exercise benefit weight, waist

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(HealthDay)—For people who are obese and sedentary, any exercise can help trim abdominal fat, but it may take a bit more effort to get other health benefits, a new study suggests. The findings were published in the March 3 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Robert Ross, Ph.D., an [exercise physiologist](#) at Queen's University in Kingston, Canada, and colleagues recruited 300 people in their 40s and 50s who were abdominally obese and got little to no [regular exercise](#). The authors then randomly assigned everyone to either a control group that remained sedentary, or one of three [exercise groups](#). All of the exercisers came to five supervised sessions a week, for six months. One group did a low amount of low-intensity activity (about a half-hour of slow walking); another group stuck with the low-intensity regimen, but for a longer period (averaging an hour per session); and a fourth got

higher-intensity exercise—namely, faster-paced walking.

The researchers found that the fast walkers burned the same number of calories as their slower-paced peers who walked for an hour—but they did it in 40 minutes. After six months, the investigators found, all three exercise groups had lost a small amount of weight and 1 or 2 inches from their waistlines, on average. But only the high-intensity group showed an improvement in [blood glucose levels](#).

"The people in this study were middle-aged, sedentary, and abdominally obese," Ross told *HealthDay*. "We didn't have them running. 'High-intensity' just meant walking briskly on a treadmill."

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