

Light, incremental physical activity can help reduce brain aging

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(HealthDay)—Incremental physical activity (PA), even of light intensity,

is associated with larger brain volume and healthy brain aging, according to a study published online April 19 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Using data from the Framingham Heart Study, Nicole L. Spartano, Ph.D., of the Boston University School of Medicine, and colleagues conducted a cross-sectional, community-based cohort study of the association of accelerometry-determined PA with brain [magnetic resonance](#) imaging (MRI) measures in a sample of 2,354 participants. The authors sought to examine the association of total steps walked per day and total dose (intensity × duration) of PA with brain volumes on MRI.

The researchers found that each additional hour spent in light-intensity physical activity was equivalent to approximately 1.1 years less brain aging. For individuals not meeting the PA guidelines, each hour of light-intensity PA and walking 7,500 steps or more per day correlated with higher total brain volume, equivalent to about 1.4 to 2.2 years less brain aging.

"After adjusting for [light-intensity](#) PA, neither increasing moderate-to-vigorous PA levels nor meeting the threshold moderate-to-vigorous PA level recommended by the PA guidelines were significantly associated with total brain volume," the authors write. "These [data](#) are consistent with the notion that the potential benefits of PA on brain aging may accrue at a lower, more achievable level of intensity or duration."

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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