

## Cognition: Mid-life physical activity and the risk of dementia

Many of us are familiar with the idea that keeping physically active may have some bearing on our mental health well being - helping us to maintain cognitive function and decreasing the risk of developing dementia as we grow older. With this idea in mind, and in view of the controversial results from epidemiological studies in this area, a team of Scandinavian researchers sought to investigate the association between leisure-time physical activity at midlife and the subsequent development of dementia and Alzheimer's disease (AD).

The participants in this particular study were randomly selected from the survivors of a population-based cohort previously surveyed in 1972, 1977, 1982, or 1987. Of the 1449 people (aged 65–79 years) re-examined in 1998, 117 persons had developed dementia and 76 had AD.

Multiple logistic regression methods were used to analyse the association between leisure-time physical activity and dementia or AD.

The research team found that leisure-time activity at midlife at least twice a week was associated with a reduced risk of dementia and AD, even after adjustments for various parameters such as age, sex, education, follow-up time, vascular disorders, smoking, and alcohol consumption were taken into account. They concluded that regular physical activity could therefore reduce the risk or delay the onset of dementia and AD, especially among those who are genetically susceptible individuals.

Reference:-

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