

**Television Viewing Time and Mortality
The Australian Diabetes, Obesity and Lifestyle Study (AusDiab)**

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These authors examined the associations of prolonged television viewing time with all-cause, cardiovascular disease (CVD), cancer, and non-CVD/non-cancer mortality in Australian adults. The study used 8,800 adults with a follow-up period of 6.6 years (58,087 person-years of follow-up).

The results presented eliminated the contribution from a number of covariables, including:

- Parental history of diabetes mellitus
- Smoking
- Highest level of educational attainment
- Previous history of CVD (self-reported angina, myocardial infarction, or stroke)
- Lipid medication use
- Exercise time
- Dietary intake (usual eating habits over the past 12 months)
- Alcohol consumption
- Oral glucose tolerance tests
- Fasting and 2-hour plasma glucose levels
- Fasting serum triglycerides, total cholesterol, and high-density-lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) levels
- Waist circumference
- Resting blood pressures

KEY POINTS FROM THIS ARTICLE:

- 1) "Moderate- to vigorous-intensity exercise has been shown to be consistently associated with reduced risk of premature mortality."
- 2) "Insufficient moderate- to vigorous-intensity exercise has long been recognized as a predictor of chronic disease and premature death."
- 3) Television viewing time is the predominant leisure-time sedentary behavior in many developed countries.
- 4) "Television viewing time was associated with increased risk of all-cause and CVD mortality." There was also a weak relationship between television viewing time and cancer and non-cancer/non-CVD mortality.

- 5) "Our findings indicate that, regardless of leisure-time exercise levels and adiposity status, there is a progressive rise in mortality risk for each 1-hour increment in television viewing."
- 6) "In addition to the promotion of exercise, chronic disease prevention strategies could focus on reducing sitting time, particularly prolonged television viewing."
- 7) "These findings indicate that television viewing time is associated with an increased risk of all-cause and CVD mortality."

CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE from authors

- 8) "The findings from this large, national population- based cohort study indicate that 6-year mortality rates from all causes and from cardiovascular disease causes are significantly higher with increased television viewing time in adults."
- 9) "Each 1-hour increment in television viewing time was found to be associated with an 11% and an 18% increased risk of all-cause and cardiovascular disease mortality, respectively."
- 10) "Relative to those watching less television (<2 h/d), there was a 46% increased risk of all-cause and an 80% increased risk of cardiovascular disease mortality in those watching >4 hours of television per day, which were independent of traditional risk factors such as smoking, blood pressure, cholesterol, and diet, as well as leisure-time exercise and waist circumference."
- 11) "Although continued emphasis on current public health guidelines on the importance of moderate- to vigorous-intensity exercise should remain, these findings suggest that reducing time spent watching television (and possibly other prolonged sedentary behaviors) may also be of benefit in preventing cardiovascular disease and premature death."
- 12) "These findings suggest that in clinical practice and public health settings, questions about television viewing time (particularly identifying whether individuals watch >4 h/d) may assist in identifying those with elevated mortality risk."

COMMENTS FROM DAN MURPHY

My two favorite exercise books are:

Younger Next Year; Live Strong, Fit, and Sexy--Until You're 80 and Beyond

Chris Crowley & Henry Lodge, MD

Workman Publishing, New York, 2007

Spark; The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain

John Ratey, MD