

# The benefits of physical activity for older adults

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Physically active older adults benefit from reduced risks of early death, breast and prostate cancer, fractures, recurrent falls, functional limitations, cognitive decline, dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and

depression. The findings come from a review of all published reviews of studies that assessed the relationship between physical activity and health in adults aged 60 years or older.

The review, which is published in the *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, also found that physically active older adults experience healthier ageing trajectories, better quality of life, and improved cognitive functioning.

"This research highlights the benefits of physical activity to our physical and [mental health](#) in older age. For some time, we have known of the benefits of [physical activity](#) for our physical health; however, what is important about this research is that it highlights compelling emerging evidence of the positive effects of being physically active on our mental health—including depression, cognition, and dementia and Alzheimer's disease," said lead author Conor Cunningham, Ph.D., of the Institute of Public Health in Ireland.

**More information:** Conor Cunningham et al, Consequences of physical inactivity in older adults: A systematic review of reviews and meta-analyses, *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports* (2020). [DOI: 10.1111/sms.13616](https://doi.org/10.1111/sms.13616)

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