

How a brisk walk could halve your risk of suffering a stroke

By Daily Mail Reporter

If you want your daily walk to count in the health stakes, make sure you get a move on.

While an hour of sauntering around makes little if any difference, a speedy brisk walk could halve the risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke.

A ten-year study of more than 10,000 people found those who jogged or who had a higher walking speed had a lower risk of cardiovascular disease than those who led couch potato lifestyles or moved about at a leisurely pace.

Researchers found a speedy brisk walk could halve the risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke

Researchers said vigorous exercise staves off metabolic syndrome – a range of conditions involved in the development of cardiovascular disease including obesity and high blood pressure.

Dr Adam Laursen, of Bispebjerg University Hospital in Copenhagen, said: 'Our results confirm the role of physical activity in reducing metabolic syndrome risk and suggest intensity more than volume of activity is important.'

'Our data indicated the risk of developing metabolic syndrome may be reduced as much as 35-50 per cent in subjects who are more physically active.'

'Metabolic syndrome is highly prevalent worldwide and incidence is considered epidemic in nature.'



The study also said said vigorous exercise staves off a range of conditions involved in the development of cardiovascular disease including obesity and high blood pressure

'Significantly lower risk of metabolic syndrome was found in the moderately and highly physically active groups compared to their sedentary counterparts whereas light physical activity and even more than one hour of walking daily did not confer protection.

'Participation in regular moderate or vigorous activity such as brisk walking could improve cardiorespiratory fitness and decrease metabolic syndrome risk.

'If results can be corroborated by intervention studies showing beneficial cardiovascular effects of increased walking speed this may represent a low-cost intervention with minimal side effects and numerous significant health benefits.'

The study of Danish men and women aged 21 to 98 found the risk of developing metabolic syndrome fell with higher walking speed and jogging – whereas the amount of walking and light physical activity had no effect.

Maureen Talbot, of British Heart Foundation, said the study showed only physical activities that leave us feeling warm or breathing more heavily are good for our health.

She added: 'If you want to make the walk to work or to the shops part of keeping your heart healthy then try turning it from a leisurely stroll into a power walk to get the benefits.'