



New Study: You Can Slow Down Colon Cancer Cell Growth with Exercise

By Danielle Belardo, MD
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As we all know, exercise is great for your heart. But did you know that exercise may play a role in slowing the growth of colon cancer cells? Research has shown that physical activity is associated with significant reductions in colorectal cancer mortality. A [2017 analysis](#) of 1,231 patients undergoing treatment for colorectal cancer found that patients who exercised more had reduced rates of cancer progression and all-cause mortality. [Previous studies](#) have also found physical activity to be associated with a lower risk of colorectal cancer-specific and all-cause mortality.

And now a new study has provided fresh evidence of exercise's anticancer potential.

The [study](#), published in *The Journal of Physiology*, evaluated the direct effect of exercise-induced changes in blood serum on colon cancer cells.

Researchers had two groups of male colorectal cancer survivors complete 38-minute sessions of high-intensity interval training (HIIT). One group did the workout three times a week for a month; the second group did just one HIIT session. Afterward, their blood was collected and the serum was incubated in vitro with cancer cells from two human colon cancer cell lines. So what did they find? Following the workouts, the growth of colon cancer cells decreased. The intense training sessions promoted transient increases in inflammatory markers known as cytokines immediately following exercise. The study's authors theorize that cytokines may be important mediators in reducing colon cancer progression.

Interestingly, the cancer-slowing effects were the same in the bloodwork of both groups after exercising. That is not to say that a single session of exercise is all that's necessary, however. As the study notes, "It is improbable that a single bout of exercise would [be sufficient] to contribute to improvements in prognosis," and "the importance of ... regular physical activity cannot be overstated."

The takeaway: This study showed the benefits of transient systemic changes following high-intensity interval exercise. Regular exercise may create an

environment in your body that is less conducive to colon cancer cell growth—one more reason to make [fitness](#) a part of your daily routine.

Ready to get started? Check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path.