

Physical Activity Habits and Incident First-Ever Stroke in Middle-Aged Adults-A Prospective Cohort Study - PubMed

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ABSTRACT

Abstract Background: Lifestyle affects the risk of cardiovascular events such as myocardial infarction and stroke. Several lifestyle factors, such as physical activity (PA), are modifiable, and in this study, we examined the association between leisure-time PA habits and the risk of a first-ever stroke. **Methods:** This prospective study included residents in Västerbotten, Sweden, who participated in the Västerbotten Intervention Programme at 40, 50, and 60 years of age. Altogether, 31,855 individuals (50.5% women, mean age: 42.6 [6.9] y at baseline) participated between 1989 and 2016. Leisure-time PA was categorized as irregular (never/now and then) or regular (once a week/2 or 3 times a week/more than 3 times a week). Changes in PA were compared between examinations (10 y apart). Cases of stroke were validated according to World Health Organization MONICA (Monitoring Trends and Determinants of Cardiovascular Disease) criteria. The risk related to changes in leisure-time PA was estimated using a multivariable Cox regression model. **Results:** During an average follow-up of 9.8 years (4.4), 609 incident first-ever stroke cases occurred (1.9%). A multivariable model showed that, compared with individuals with irregular PA at both examinations, those reporting regular PA over time had a lower risk of stroke (hazard ratio: 0.78, 95% CI, 0.61-0.99). **Conclusion:** Middle-aged adults who maintained regular PA during their leisure time over 10 years had a lower risk of a first-ever stroke. This association is probably partly mediated by lower body mass index and a reduced risk of hypertension and diabetes. **Keywords:** epidemiology; exercise; healthy lifestyle; incidence.

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