Cancer news: Doing THIS will significantly reduce risk of tumours and even heart disease

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CANCER and heart disease risk could be significantly lowered if people decide to walk or cycle to work.

Risk of developing [cancer](http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/health/793938/Cancer-patients-diet-survive-longer-disease) and heart disease - two deadly diseases responsible for the deaths of thousands of people each year - could be halved if people ditch the bus for their trainers.

The research published in the British Medical Journal found those who incorporated physical activity had a 45 per cent reduction in their likelihood of cancer and 46 per cent reduction in their likelihood of heart disease.

This was compared to those who took a “non active” commute to the office, such as by train or bus.

In addition to walking, the researchers - who studied more than 250,000 British people for five years - discovered those who cycled were 41 per cent less likely to suffer a premature death from any cause.

The study found just two hours of physical activity during your commute a week are needed to get the benefits from lowered risk of heart attack, [stroke](http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/health/793621/stroke-symptoms-death-rate) and death, meaning you needn’t walk or cycle to work every single day.

However, walkers need to travel more than six miles a week to feel the benefits, while cyclists need to do at least 30 miles.

Interestingly, the team in Glasgow removed from the statistics other possible explanations for the results - including smoking, diet or weight - but the benefits from cycling and walking were still clear.

Cycling was considered to be slightly better than walking as a mode of commuter transport since it is usually longer and more intense.

Cyclists were generally leaner and had lower levels of inflammation in the body.

These new findings were welcomed by experts who suggested simply moving more could dramatically improve the country’s health levels.

The researchers explained that, unlike going to the gym, being active on your way to work takes no willpower once it becomes part of a commuter routine.

“Physical activity helps to reduce the risk of cancer and, while the researchers are cautious about concluding too much about their results, this study helps to highlight the potential benefits of building activity into your everyday life,” said Clare Hyde, Cancer Research UK's health information officer.

"You don't need to join a gym or run the marathon. Anything that gets you a bit hot and out of breath - whether it's cycling all or part way to work or doing some housework - can help make a difference,” she added.

risk of heart disease

Experts are calling for employers and other organisations to make it is easier for people to be active.

“It is worrying levels of physical activity in the UK are falling as this is associated with an increasing number of heart attacks, strokes and other conditions - including cancers,” said Dr Mike Knapton, associate medical director at the British Heart Foundation.

"Commuting to work by walking, or better still, cycling, is a great way to combine physical activity into your normal daily routine. It is paramount to make physical activity easier and more accessible if we are to reduce the burden of ill health caused by inactivity.

"Local authorities and workplaces should support this by making using active transport as a means to get to work an easy option,” he added.