**Cycling to work 'halves the risk of heart disease and cancer': Study finds that biking just a short distance is far more beneficial than walking**

* **Adults who cycle to work are 45 per cent less likely to get cancer, research finds**
* **Risk of dying prematurely from any cause is 41 per cent lower**
* **Study of 250,000 people was carried out by team from Glasgow University**

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* [e-mail](mailto:?subject=Read%20this:%20Cycling%20to%20work%20%27halves%20the%20risk%20of%20heart%20disease%20and%20cancer%27:%20Study%20finds%20that%20biking%20just%20a%20short%20distance%20is%20far%20more%20beneficial%20than%20walking%C2%A0&body=Cycling%20to%20work%20%27halves%20the%20risk%20of%20heart%20disease%20and%20cancer%27%3A%20Study%20finds%20that%20biking%20just%20a%20short%20distance%20is%20far%20more%20beneficial%20than%20walking%C2%A0%0A%0AAdults%20who%20commute%20by%20bike%20are%2045%20per%20cent%20less%20likely%20to%20get%20cancer%20and%2046%20per%20cent%20less%20susceptible%20to%20heart%20disease%2C%20according%20to%20researchers%20from%20the%20University%20of%20Glasgow.%0A%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailymail.co.uk%2Fnews%2Farticle-4427142%2FCycling-work-halves-risk-heart-disease-cancer.html%3Fito%3Demail_share_article-top%0A%0A%0AMost%20Read%20Articles%3A%0A%0ASecrets%20to%20a%20celebrity%20body%3A%20Trainer%20to%20Jennifer%20Aniston%2C%20Julia%20Roberts%20and%20Drew%20Barrymore%20reveals%20how%20YOU%20can%20get%20an%20A-list%20figure%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailymail.co.uk%2Fhealth%2Farticle-4559850%2FTrainer-Jennifer-Aniston-gives-tips.html%3Fito%3Demail_share_article-top_most-read-articles%0A%0AWould%20you%20put%20ground-up%20WASP%20NESTS%20in%20your%20vagina%3F%20Gynecologist%20warns%20against%20dangerous%20new%20trend%20that%20promises%20to%20tighten%2C%20clean%20and%20rejuvenate%20your%20genitals%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailymail.co.uk%2Fhealth%2Farticle-4560228%2FWomen-putting-ground-wasp-nests-vagina-tighten-it.html%3Fito%3Demail_share_article-top_most-read-articles%0A%0A%27Alien%27%20baby%20born%20with%204%20LEGS%20has%20her%20extra%20limbs%20removed%20during%20a%20complex%20operation%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailymail.co.uk%2Fhealth%2Farticle-4559130%2FAlien-baby-born-4-LEGS-finally-normal.html%3Fito%3Demail_share_article-top_most-read-articles%0A%0A)

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Cycling to work slashes the risk of cancer, heart problems or dying early by almost half, British research shows today.

Adults who commute by bike are 45 per cent less likely to get cancer and 46 per cent less susceptible to heart disease.

Their risk of dying prematurely from any cause is 41 per cent lower – despite the dangers of cycling on roads. The study of a quarter of a million adults showed that biking even short distances was far more beneficial than walking or using public transport.

Glasgow scientists behind the findings are calling for a ‘step change’ in policy – including building more cycle lanes – to prevent long-term illnesses.

Only about 7 per cent of British adults regularly cycle to work and just 4 per cent do it every day. Many are put off by heavy traffic, the weather or not being able to shower at the office.

Although cycling has obvious health benefits, this study is the first to show how it compares to walking or taking the bus.

The researchers, whose findings are published in the BMJ, studied the commuting habits of 263,450 middle aged men and women. They assessed their health for five years and recorded whether they developed cancer, heart disease or died of any cause.

Adults who walked to work – typically six miles a week – were 27 per cent less likely to develop heart disease than those who drove or took public transport.

But walking did not protect them against cancer or other chronic health problems – possibly because they were not exercising for long enough. Adults who cycled to work for any distance were more than 40 per cent less likely to get cancer, heart disease or die within the next five years.

Dr Jason Gill, from Glasgow University’s Institute of Cardiovascular and Medical Sciences, said: ‘Cycling all or part of the way to work was associated with substantially lower risk of adverse health.

‘If these associations are causal, they suggest that policies to make it easier to commute by bike – such as cycle lanes, city bike hire or subsidised cycle purchase schemes – may present major opportunities for public health improvement.

‘What we need now is a step change in the way we develop transport systems like we have seen in the Netherlands and Scandinavia, where cycling is normal and cities are built around it.

‘It is the biggest study into modes of commuting and their health effects than all the previous ones put together and shows conclusively that cycling to work reduces risk of cancer and heart disease.’

Co-author Dr Carlos Celis-Morales said that cycling may be more beneficial than walking because cyclists tend to travel further. He added that ‘walking is generally a lower intensity exercise’.

NHS figures last month showed that a quarter of adults are inactive, meaning they don’t even manage 30 minutes of brisk walking or cycling a week. Statistics also show that the number of people who cycle to work in Britain has stayed the same over the past decade.

Clare Hyde, Cancer Research UK’s health information officer, said: ‘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.

‘Anything that gets you a bit hot and out of breath can help make a difference.’

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