Cycling can cut cancer risk by half

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Cycling to work, rather than driving or taking public transport, could cut a commuter’s risk of dying early by 41 per cent, according to a study.

It was also found to be associated with a 45 per cent lower risk of developing cancer and a 46 per cent lower risk of heart disease.

Researchers from the University of Glasgow analysed data from more than 250,000 people signed up to the research project UK Biobank, aged 52 on average, who were asked about how they travelled to work and were followed up for five years.

The study, published in the *BMJ*, found walking to work was associated with a 27 per cent lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease and a 36 per cent lower risk of dying from it.

However, walking was not linked with a decreased risk of developing cancer, or premature death overall.

Dr Jason Gill, a co-author, said: “Cycling all or part of the way to work was associated with substantially lower risk of adverse health outcomes. Those who cycled the full length of their commute had an over 40 per cent lower risk of heart disease, cancer and overall mortality over the five years of follow-up.

“If these associations are causal, these findings suggest that policies to make it easier for people to commute by bike may present major opportunities for public health improvement.”