

Sitting Down For Too Long Linked To Chronic Disease, Study

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AsianScientist (Feb. 25, 2013) - Office workers, truck drivers, and couch potatoes beware: a new study has found that men who spend more than four hours of each day sitting down are more likely to experience chronic disease such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure.

In the University of Western Sydney (UWS) study, 63,048 Australian males aged 45 to 64 years old were asked to report on a range of health-related variables including the presence or absence of chronic diseases, and their daily sitting time.

Sitting time was divided into four categories: less than four hours, four to six hours, six to eight hours, and more than eight hours.

Compared with those who spent four hours or less sitting down each day, participants reporting higher amounts of sitting were much more likely to report serious health conditions, said Emma George, a Ph.D. researcher from the UWS School of Science and Health, who conducted the study together with researchers at UWS and Kansas State University in the U.S.

"The rates of chronic diseases reported by the participants exponentially increased in proportion with the amount of time the participants spent sitting down," she said.

Independent of factors such as age, BMI, and level of physical activity, the amount of time men spent sitting each day was significantly associated with chronic disease and diabetes – indicating that, despite how active people may be outside of work hours, the amount of time spent sitting during the day may still have a significant impact.

"Despite your levels of physical activity, the more time you spend sitting the less time your body has to stay active and expend energy," says George.

George says the study is highly relevant to office workers and anyone whose daily job requires them to sit down for long periods of time, such as truck drivers.

"The results of this study suggest that there is potential for people to improve their overall health if they found more opportunities to move around during the day and reduce the amount of time spent sitting," she says.

"People should consider ways that they can integrate movement into their daily routines. Perhaps arranging 'active' meetings rather than a teleconference, or walk around during your lunch break rather than sitting at your desk."

The research is part of the 45 and Up Study, the largest long-term study of aging in Australia, involving more than 267,000 people. The results have been published in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*.

The article can be found at: [George S et al. \(2013\) Chronic disease and sitting time in middle-aged Australian males: findings from the 45 and Up Study.](#)

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