

Sitting for Long Periods May Lead to an Early Death

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. sedentary /'sed.ən.ter.i/ (adjective) involving little exercise or physical activity
Example: My doctor says I should start playing sports because my lifestyle is too sedentary.
2. premature /,pri:.mə'tʊr/ (adjective) happening or done too soon, especially before the natural or suitable time
Example: The disease is causing an increasing number of premature deaths, despite advances in treatment.
3. annal /'æn.əl/ historical records of the activities of a country, organization, group, etc.; history in general
Example: The signing of the Treaty of Rome was the greatest event in the annals of European integration.
4. longevity /lɑ:n'dʒev.ə.ti/ living for a long time
Example: He attributed his longevity to exercise and a healthy diet.
5. reverse /rɪ'vɜ:s/ to change the direction, order, position, result, etc. of something to its opposite
Example: The new manager hoped to reverse the decline in the company's fortunes.



If you spend most of your days sitting at school, work, at a computer or stretched out on a couch at home, you may be taking up to two years off your life. It is common knowledge that a **sedentary** lifestyle increases the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer and obesity, and can result in **premature** death.

Many people think they can make up for sitting around by walking, playing sports or going to the gym. Unfortunately, this might not be so. A new study just published in the journal '**Annals** of Internal Medicine' suggests the effect on our **longevity** from sitting for long periods of time cannot be **reversed** through exercise. Even 60 minutes of daily exercise may not be enough.

The study is from Dr David Alter and his colleagues at Toronto University. Dr Alter and his team analyzed 47 studies that tracked different groups of people, who kept notes on how long they sat down each day and how much they exercised. They found that the most sedentary groups had a 24% increased chance of dying during the course of the study than the least sedentary ones.

This remained the case even though those who sat a lot also did 60 minutes of daily exercise. Dr Alter writes: "**Reducing** your sit-down time by 2-3 hours each day by standing up at your desk, taking **frequent** breaks to stretch and walk, or watching TV...on your feet may be better than an expensive, crowded, **smelly** gym and be just what the doctor ordered."

DISCUSSION

1. Would you stop sitting down if it meant you lived longer?
2. What are the best things to do while sitting?
3. What do you think of the idea of a standing up chair?
4. What do you think of the idea of watching TV standing up?
5. How would houses and offices be different if we never sat?