Are exercise and lifespan connected? Various studies over the last two decades have explored the relationship between your fitness routine and how long you might live. Read on to find out how exercise can improve your life, and possibly even help you live longer.

Last year in 2009, the Los Angeles Times published an article about exercise and longevity. (http://articles.latimes.com/2009/jul/13/health/he-exercise13) The article cited a 2007 study showing a connection between lifespan and exercise 2,603 participants were involved in the study, which focused on cardiovascular health, diabetes susceptibility, and muscle mass to prevent falling.

Over 20 years ago, in 1989, The New York Times published a very similar article, also citing studies demonstrating the connection between exercise and lifespan. (http://www.nytimes.com/1989/11/03/us/exercise-and-longevity-a-little-goes-a-long-way.html) The study did not elaborate on what health aspects exercise improved, just that the mortality rate was 3 times higher in the least fit category.
Both studies used a treadmill test to determine the fitness level of participants. The 1989 study followed 13,000 participants, including men and women, for an average of 8 years. Both studies explained that the biggest health gains came with just modest exercise, as little as 30 minutes of walking per day in some cases.

By eating right (see our Men's Guide To Eating Healthy) and exercising, even modestly, you could extend your lifespan too. What do you think? Are exercise and longevity connected? Tell us in the comments!

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