
Running Lowers Risk of Death



There has been extensive literature on the benefits of exercise, including running. Not only does running improve physical endurance, it has been shown to lower body weight, enable better control of blood pressure and blood glucose, improve mental health and lower the risk of adverse cardiac events. However, current literature on how much to run, at what pace or intensity, the duration, how many times a week and what distance is confusing and difficult to follow. Some articles state that one must perform intense running every day to derive benefits while others claim that running alternate days at a slow pace is adequate.

In this systematic review and meta-analysis, researchers tried to determine if running was associated with a lower risk of all-cause cardiovascular and cancer mortality. They also tried to determine if more exercise was better for health.

The researchers reviewed many publications, journals and conference papers. They also performed a PubMed search on relevant topics on running and the health benefits. The studies they looked at were all prospective cohort studies on the association between jogging or running and the risk of all-cause cancer and/or cardiac mortality in adults not in a clinical facility. They gathered data from 14 studies with six prospective cohorts with pooled samples of 232,149 participants.

Over a 5.5-35 years follow up, the total number of deaths recorded were 25,951. The meta-analysis revealed that participating in running was associated with a 27%, 30% and 23% lower risk of all-cause cardiac and cancer mortality respectively, compared to not participating in running. Meta-regression analyses did not show any significant dose-response trends for the weekly duration, weekly frequency, pace and the total volume of running.

These findings suggest that people who participate in running, regardless of the intensity or frequency, will have a marked improvement in their health. They also suggest that any amount of running or even running one day a week is better than not running. However, running more frequently or with more intensity may not be associated with lower mortality benefits.

Source: [British Journal of Sports Medicine](#)

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