

# Short bursts of exercise may cut heart disease risk

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(Medical Xpress)—A University of Queensland study has found high-intensity short-duration exercise provides better results than the recommended 30 minutes of daily exercise.

Researchers are looking at the benefits of high intensity interval training as the most effective way of reducing the risk of [heart disease](#) in people with [metabolic syndrome](#).

Metabolic syndrome, suffered by 30 per cent of the Australian population, involves a combination of being overweight or obese and having either high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes.

Professor Jeff Coombes at UQ's School of Human Movement Studies said the trial was in early stages; but results had been promising.

"Out of the 25 participants who have taken part in the high intensity exercise program, seven no longer have metabolic syndrome," Professor Coombes said.

"Participants observed improved weight loss and a reversal in high levels of cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure, as well as improved fitness levels.

"By simultaneously reducing these risk factors you significantly decrease the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke.

"Exercise is a proven way to manage many health problems, but these results show that short bursts of high intensity exercise could get the same, if not better, results in half the time."

The study, conducted by PhD student Joyce Ramos, involved participants training three times a week for 16 weeks, with one group exercising at high intensity for on four-minute period and a second group exercising at [high intensity](#) for four four-minute periods.

Results were compared with a control group exercising moderately for half an hour.

"We are working to confirm these exciting results through a multi-centre international trial with 750 individuals," Prof Coombes said.

High-intensity [interval training](#) involves alternating short periods of intense exercise with less [intense exercise](#) in the same session.

UQ is now looking for a second group of participants to take part in the study.

People are invited to the study if they are 30 years or older, overweight, and have two of the following: high glucose or diabetes; [high cholesterol](#); or [high blood pressure](#).

**More information:** For more information visit:  
[www.hms.uq.edu.au/research/res ... -and-health-\(crexpah\)](http://www.hms.uq.edu.au/research/res...-and-health-(crexpah))

Provided by University of Queensland

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