

Did you know?

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

A new study in the journal “Neurology” suggests that working out is the most effective way to protect the brain from Alzheimer’s disease.

Researchers studied roughly 700 study participants from Scotland, all of whom were born in 1936. Each participant reported their levels of leisure and physical activity at age 70, rating their physical activity on a scale from moving only to perform household chores to participating in heavy exercise or competitive sport several times per week. Participants were also asked to rate how often they engaged in social or intellectual activities.

At age 73, participants received an MRI to measure certain biomarkers in their brains. Those who participated in more physical activity showed less brain shrinkage and fewer white matter lesions, both of which can be signs of Alzheimer’s disease.

And while social and intellectual activities can be beneficial in preventing Alzheimer’s disease, the study found that social and intellectual engagement weren’t as helpful to the brain as physical exercise.

The types of physical exercise most beneficial to the brain are still being studied, though information presented at the 2012 Alzheimer’s Association’s International Conference suggested that strength training is perhaps the most effective form of exercise.

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