

## RUNNING SHORTS

### **Study shows that running regularly can extend life**

**Runners are more likely to be disabled for a shorter period of time later in life**

By Ken Johnson

A recently released longitudinal study by Stanford University Medical Center suggests that over a 20-year period, runners are half as likely to die as non-runners.

The study began in 1984 with 538 runners and 423 non-runners. All participants in the study were 50 years or older. Both groups came from the university's faculty and staff and had similar social and economic backgrounds. Their physical condition was followed over a 21-year period. Participants in the study completed an annual questionnaire, which included a report running and exercise frequency, body mass index and disability assessed by the Health Assessment Questionnaire. A total of 284 runners and 156 non-runners completed the study for the entire 21 years. Death and causes of death were obtained from the National Death Index. Most of the study participants did some exercise, but the runners exercised as much as 200 minutes of week, compared to 20 minutes for the non-runners.

At 19 years, 15% of the runners had died, compared to 34% of the non-runners. Researchers also found that running reduced the risk of heart disease, cancer and neurological diseases, such as Alzheimer's. Members of the running group had significantly lower mean disability levels at all time points during the study.

The study was originally designed as a test of the "compression of morbidity hypothesis," with the assumption that runners would show a greater compression of disability in the remaining years of life. In other words, runners would be disabled for a shorter period later in life. The results of the study suggest that is true. It showed that runners reached a specified level of disability 6.2 years later than non-runners.

The conclusion of the study is that vigorous exercise, such as running, at middle and older ages is associated with reduced disability in later life and a notable survival advantage.

As this column has suggested many times, it's time to start running to achieve and maintain physical fitness. Make sure you check with your doctor before you start a running program. It is also time to lose that extra weight and for goodness sake, quit smoking.

#### **Race Results**

Heat Wave 5K, Huntsville, Aug. 23

John Slate	22:27
James Spencer	22:46
Norman Langwell	24:26
Joshua Cole	25:04
Stephen Adams	25:28
John Cook	29:27
Lavonne Zaiontz	30:38
Ron Davis	34:41
Colleen Spencer	36:50
True Cousins	36:52

Skipper Nethery 37:23  
Ken Johnson 37:29  
Amanda Gutierrez 38:36  
Mary Ann Davis 54:46  
1-Mile Walk  
Marilynn Johnson 17:16  
Benezy Purple Monkey, Alvin, Aug. 30  
10K (6.2 miles)  
Adrienne Langelier 40:29 (1<sup>st</sup> female)  
Robert Duncan 42:12 (4<sup>th</sup> in age group)  
5K  
John Slate 22:10 (1<sup>st</sup> in age group)

**Upcoming Races**

Sept. 6 – Bearkat Bash 5K, Spring  
Sept. 13 – Run the Woodlands 5K, The Woodlands  
Sept. 27 – Fall Fun Run, 10K & 5K, Huntsville  
Oct. 11 – Huntsville Half Marathon & 5K Run/Walk  
Oct. 25 – Shiitake Mushroom Festival 5K, Madisonville

For more information about these and other races, visit the Seven Hills Running Club web site at <http://www.7hills.us> and click on Race Schedule.