Exercise Tied to Lower Liver Cancer Risk

Those who exercise build up less liver fat, which is tied to inflammation that may give rise to cancer.

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People who exercise regularly, especially those who do so vigorously, have a lower rate of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC, the most common form of liver cancer), Healio reports.

Publishing their findings in the Journal of Hepatology, researchers analyzed data on 467,336 members of the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition cohort. During a median follow-up time of 14.9 years, 275 participants were diagnosed with liver cancer.

Those who reported engaging in any physical activity were 45 percent less likely to develop liver cancer compared with those who said they were physically inactive. And those who said they engaged in more than two hours of vigorous activity weekly, compared with those who reported no vigorous activity, were 95 percent less likely to be diagnosed with the cancer.

Waist circumference accounted for 40 percent of the overall association between physical activity and liver cancer risk, while body mass index accounted for 30 percent of the association.

The study authors theorized that body fat accumulation around the waistline may be associated with liver cancer because it is tied to buildup of excessive liver fat, which produces molecules that give rise to inflammation. Chronic inflammation can itself drive the development of cancer.

To read the Healio article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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