

## Preventing Health Problems Through Running

In this study, I investigate the affects that running has on reducing the risk of some health problems. I am doing this because I run about 40 to 60 miles per week, and my family has a history of health problems. For instance, my grandfather suffered a heart attack, and he also had cancer when he was about the age of 50. Furthermore, my grandfather, on my dad's side of the family, has also had triple bi-pass heart surgery from a heart attack he has had recently. Here, I present information from some sources that talk about the affects that running has on reducing health risks. My sources agree that running, and some other aerobic exercises, reduce the risk of: Diabetes, diverticular disease, heart decease, several types of cancer, and even common sicknesses like a cold. One source agrees that running reduces the risk of diabetes. Jim Harmon writes, in Sports Illustrated, about Bruce Leonard, a marathoner with a masters degree in public health. Bruce Leonard went to study the Zuni Indian tribe. This tribe has had a bad history of diabetes until they started to run. Leonard said, After the Zuni tribe started running, "many Zuni were able to reduce or eliminate their diabetes medication."(5)

My research also reveled that diverticular disease can be reduced in men that run. For instance, Marty Munson and Teresa Yeykal writes in the article "Outrun trouble" which says, "guys who racked up the most ours doing vigorous exercise reduced their risks of diverticular decease by a third."(38) They also say "it's good advice to make your lifestyle to consume high fiber."(38)

I found that running can also reduce the risk of heart disease. The article "Run for your life" talks about Mitchell H. Whaley, the director of adult physical fitness program at Ball State University. He analyzed data collected from a group of men, which included runners. Mitchell Whaley found that "individuals with low aerobic capacity have a higher risk of developing premature coronary artery decease that those who were more fit."(47) The article also talks about Martha L. Slattery, Ph.D., from the University of Utah Medical School. Maria Slattery also found that running is a good preventive measure for heart disease. She says, "The greatest increase in protection was between those men who were sedentary and those who had some activity."(48)

Another source I found says that running can help prevent many types of cancer. In the article "Running for your life", Doctor Leonard Cohen talks about how running helps reduce colon, breast, cervical, uterine, and ovarian cancer. Cohen says "A growing body of evidence suggest that physical activity reduces the risk of cancer, particularly colon and breast cancer."(23)

Overall, my sources state that even though running isn't a cure, it is definitely a preventive measure for many health problems. They all agree that running can do no harm, and there are many positive aspects. After doing this research, I am going to continue running or at least some king of aerobic exercise, hoping that it will prevent me from following in my grandparents footsteps.

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