

Study: Regular exercise good for the brain

By Huffington Post

Finding time to exercise every day could be powerful tool in warding off brain shrinkage, called atrophy, that comes with aging, according to a new study.

Researchers from the Center for Development of Advanced Medicine for Dementia in Japan found that adults who moved more during the day were less likely to experience progression of frontal lobe atrophy, which is the shrinking of the frontal lobe region of the brain. That part of the brain plays a part in emotions, problem-solving, memory, judgment and personality.

“Incorporating physical activity into your daily routine can be a helpful step to prevent conditions caused by brain atrophy, such as dementia,” study researcher Atsumu Yuki, said in a statement.

The study, to be published next month in the journal *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, included 381 men and 393 women, who were followed for an average of eight years.

Researchers conducted MRI brain scans on the study participants at the beginning and end of the study period to monitor atrophy of the frontal lobe and the temporal lobe of the brain. Their daily activity levels were monitored via accelerometry sensors.

The researchers found that people who had expended the most energy from physical activity in the study, as well as people who took the most steps, had lower odds of developing frontal lobe atrophy than those who took the least steps and had the least amount of physical activity. However, they didn't find a

link between exercise and atrophy of the temporal lobe.

A similar study in the journal *Neurology*, which was published just recently, also showed an association between physical activity and decreased brain atrophy, as well as fewer white matter brain lesions, in people over age 70. However, the University of Edinburgh researchers noted that because the study was observational, it was unclear which factor caused the other.