



Why Commuting by Bike Cuts Sick Days

Description

Consider yet another compelling reason to contemplate cycling as a mode of transportation to the workplace: recent research has elucidated that individuals who commute by bicycle are generally predisposed to experience fewer instances of sick leave, as well as a diminished likelihood of prolonged absences due to health-related issues.

This study, spearheaded by researchers affiliated with the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, meticulously scrutinized self-reported data from a substantial cohort of 28,485 municipal employees over the span of one year, with a considerable number of participants subjected to follow-up assessments in a subsequent year.

In juxtaposition to passive commuting—such as traveling by private vehicle or public transit—those who pedaled a robust 61 kilometers (approximately 38 miles) weekly exhibited a 8-12 percent reduction in the probability of taking sick days and an astounding 18 percent decrease in the likelihood of being absent for no less than ten consecutive days owing to illness. Notably, the most physically active commuters reported, on average, 4.5 fewer days of sickness than their passive counterparts, coupled with a reduction of one long-term illness episode per decade.

Biking charts or type unknown

Commuters who engaged in higher physical activity reported fewer sick days. (Kalliolahti et al., *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, 2025)

"Existing scholarship has chronicled the health and environmental advantages of active commuting; however, its correlation with long-term absences due to illness has remained uncharted territory," asserts Essi Kalliolahti, a public health scientist within the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

Although the researchers considered a range of variables, including sex, age, alcohol consumption, and socio-economic status, the data underscores a robust correlation rather than a direct causal relationship between cycling and health outcomes.

These findings resonate with prior investigations pertinent to bicycle commuting, although the underlying reasons for this association remain speculative. It is plausible that those who maintain an active lifestyle might inherently possess a lower susceptibility to various common health afflictions; conversely, individuals with pre-existing health challenges may find cycling to be an arduous endeavor.

In contrast to walking, the researchers established that cycling is evidently superior in curbing sick days, though this advantage appears predominantly among those undertaking more extensive cycling commutes. This may suggest that mere walking may not sufficiently elevate physical exertion or that long-distance cyclists may benefit from other, unexamined factors that contribute to their enhanced health.



Despite its myriad benefits, cycling remains an impractical choice for everyone—especially in urban environments where it may pose stressors—but it is a viable strategy to enhance attendance at work while concurrently mitigating emissions associated with alternative commuting means.

"Given that only half of adults meet the recommended levels of physical activity, incorporating cycling or walking into daily commutes can serve as a strategic means to foster health-promoting exercise," remarks Jenni Ervasti, an epidemiologist affiliated with the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

Ultimately, the implications of this research advocate fervently for the promotion and investment in active commuting, particularly cycling.

This study has been published in the [Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports](#).

Vocabulary List:

1. **Elucidated** /ɪˈluː.sɪ.deɪ.tɪd/ (verb): Made something clear or easy to understand.
2. **Juxtaposition** /ˌdʒʌk.stə.pəˈzɪʃ.ən/ (noun): The fact of two things being seen or placed close together to highlight contrast.
3. **Probabilities** /ˌprɒbəˈbɪlɪtɪz/ (noun): The ratios that express the likelihood of an event occurring.
4. **Speculative** /ˈspɛk.jʊ.lə.tɪv/ (adjective): Based on conjecture rather than knowledge; involving a lot of guessing.
5. **Correlations** /ˌkɔːr.əˈleɪ.ʃənz/ (noun): Mutual relationships or connections between two or more things.
6. **Impractical** /ɪmˈpræk.tɪ.kəl/ (adjective): Not suited for use or action in real situations; not reasonable or realistic.

Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice

1. According to recent research, what is a benefit of commuting by bicycle to the workplace?

- Option: Increased likelihood of promotions
- Option: Reduced instances of sick leave
- Option: Higher salary increments
- Option: Longer lunch breaks

2. How many kilometers per week did the study suggest cycling to reduce the probability of taking sick days?

- Option: 15 kilometers
- Option: 38 kilometers



Option: 50 kilometers

Option: 72 kilometers

3. What was the percentage decrease in the likelihood of being absent for no less than ten consecutive days due to illness, for those cycling 61 kilometers weekly?

Option: 2-4%

Option: 8-12%

Option: 15-18%

Option: 20-24%

4. Which group reported on average 4.5 fewer sick days compared to passive commuters?

Option: Least physically active commuters

Option: Most physically active commuters

Option: Mid-level physically active commuters

Option: Intermittently active commuters

5. What was one long-term illness episode reduction per decade associated with, as per the study?

Option: Cycling 10 kilometers weekly

Option: Walking 5 kilometers daily

Option: Cycling 61 kilometers weekly

Option: Using public transit exclusively

6. What did the researchers establish to be superior to walking in curbing sick days?

Option: Running

Option: Swimming

Option: Cycling

Option: Weightlifting

True-False

7. The study was conducted by researchers affiliated with the American Institute of Occupational Health.

8. There is a direct causal relationship between cycling and health outcomes as per the study data.

9. The benefits of cycling commute include mitigating emissions associated with alternative commuting means.

10. Only individuals with pre-existing health challenges may find cycling to be an arduous endeavor.



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11. Long-distance cyclists may benefit from unexamined factors contributing to their enhanced health.
12. Cycling is considered an impractical choice for everyone, especially in urban environments.

Gap-Fill

13. Individuals who pedaled a robust 61 kilometers weekly exhibited a _____ percent reduction in the probability of taking sick days.
14. The study was spearheaded by researchers affiliated with the _____ Institute of Occupational Health.
15. Jenni Ervasti, an _____ affiliated with the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, remarked on the benefits of cycling or walking into daily commutes.
16. According to the research, incorporating cycling or walking into daily commutes can serve as a strategic means to foster _____-promoting exercise.
17. The study has been published in the Scandinavian Journal of _____ & Science in Sports.
18. The researchers considered a range of variables including sex, age, alcohol consumption, and _____-economic status.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Reduced instances of sick leave 2. 38 kilometers 3. 8-12% 4. Most physically active commuters 5. Cycling 61 kilometers weekly 6. Cycling

True-False: 7. False 8. False 9. True 10. False 11. True 12. False

Gap-Fill: 13. 8-12 14. Finnish 15. epidemiologist 16. health 17. Medicine 18. socio

Vocabulary quizzes



Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. What is the meaning of "elucidated"?
Option: a. Explained or clarified
Option: b. Accelerated or enlarged
Option: c. Discarded or removed
Option: d. Composed or created

2. Which term refers to the likelihood of something happening?
Option: a. Probabilities
Option: b. Speculative
Option: c. Correlations
Option: d. Aptitude

3. What does the term "impractical" mean?
Option: a. Very practical
Option: b. Not feasible or sensible
Option: c. Extremely useful
Option: d. Unintended outcome

4. Which term is related to the mental processes of perception and understanding?
Option: a. Cognitive
Option: b. Aptitude
Option: c. Engagements
Option: d. Genesis

5. What does "colossal" mean?
Option: a. Tiny
Option: b. Magnificent
Option: c. Gigantic
Option: d. Delicate

6. Which word means remarkably or impressively great in extent size or degree?
Option: a. Impractical
Option: b. Prodigious
Option: c. Parallel
Option: d. Nuanced

7. What does "efficacy" mean?
Option: a. Strength
Option: b. Joy
Option: c. Effectiveness



Option: d. Depletion

8. Which term is related to the measurement of the amount of sugar in blood?

- Option: a. Glycemic
- Option: b. Aptitude
- Option: c. Erosion
- Option: d. Instigated

9. What does "burgeoning" mean?

- Option: a. Shrinking
- Option: b. Expanding or growing rapidly
- Option: c. Limited
- Option: d. Outgoing or friendly

10. What are "obstructions"?

- Option: a. Unpredictable
- Option: b. Barriers or obstacles
- Option: c. Innovations
- Option: d. Adaptations

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. Good leaders are not only assertive but also _____ ensuring effective information flow within the team.

12. Over time the continuous water flow caused _____ of the ancient stone carvings.

13. The scientist discussed the _____ of the universe in his groundbreaking research.

14. Volcanic eruptions can release ash lava and other volcanic _____ into the atmosphere.

15. The new regulations have significant _____ for small businesses in the region.

16. The controversial decision _____ a heated debate among the board members.

17. A sedentary lifestyle and excessive calorie intake can lead to increased _____ or fat accumulation.

18. The laboratory studies focus on the _____ effects of various environmental



pollutants.

19. The doctor specializes in treating disorders of the brain and nerves known as _____

conditions.

20. The aroma of fresh coffee began to _____ the entire house.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. In the artwork the artist used of light and dark colors to create a sense of balance.
22. Investing in cryptocurrencies is considered a venture due to the high volatility in the market.
23. The professor drew a between the human brain and a computer to explain complex cognitive processes.
24. The old mansion was eerie and of any signs of life or habitation.
25. The company announced new business with international partners to expand its market presence.
26. The exhibition explored the of modern art movements in the context of historical events.
27. Studies have shown that marine life ingests leading to ecological concerns about ocean pollution.
28. The researchers studied the development of infants to understand early learning processes.
29. The tech industry in the region is experiencing a growth attracting new talent and investments.
30. The political unrest was by economic disparities and social inequality.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. a. Explained or clarified 2. a. Probabilities 3. b. Not feasible or sensible 4. a. Cognitive 5. c. Gigantic 6. b. Prodigious 7. c. Effectiveness 8. a. Glycemic 9. b. Expanding or growing rapidly 10. b. Barriers or obstacles

Gap-Fill: 11. communicative 12. erosion 13. genesis 14. ejecta 15. implications 16. instigated 17. adiposity 18. toxicological 19. neurological 20. permeate

Matching sentence: 1. juxtaposition 2. speculative 3. parallel 4. devoid 5. engagements 6. genesis 7. microplastics 8. cognitive 9. burgeoning 10. instigated



CATEGORY

1. Health - LEVEL6

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