

Muscle strength predicts cancer mortality

Men in a longitudinal study observing exercise patterns in Texas were tested for muscle strength using maximum leg and bench press measurements. A group of 8,677 men were followed for over 20 years, and cancer deaths were recorded. Men in the lowest third of muscle strength were most likely to die of cancer, a statistically very significant result. Those in the middle third of muscle strength were 35% less likely to die of cancer, while those in the highest third of muscle strength were 39% less likely to die of cancer (hazard ratios 0.65 and 0.61, respectively). These results were adjusted for body mass index, body fat percentage and waist circumference, which did not make much difference in the results for muscle strength. Thus, men with low muscle strength are more likely to die from cancer, regardless of their body fat levels.

Ruiz JR et al. Muscular strength and adiposity as predictors of adulthood cancer mortality in men. *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev.* 2009; April 14 epublication

To summarize: Men with low levels of muscle strength are significantly more likely to die of cancer than those with medium or high levels of muscle strength.