

## 3 Health Study Results: Exercise, Public Potties and Night Owls

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Take a daily trip through Google Health and you're likely to find a new health study. Here are three that we think will interest you.

### **Health Study No. 1: Exercise & Heart Disease Risk vs. Genetics**

A health study followed the exercise habits of 500,000 men and women of various ages and races in Europe for six years. All participants had genetic risks for heart disease. Some had additional risk factors, such as diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

The health study findings: Regardless of genetics, the most active participants in the health study had a 50% less risk of having cardiovascular complications. Ditto for the participants who had either a low or moderate risk for heart disease based on genetics.

The American Heart Association recommends 40 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity up to four times a week to prevent a heart attack or a stroke.

### **Health Study No. 2: Flushing Lidless Toilets & Hand Dryers.**

We predict this health study will make you cover your mouth and scream, "Ewwwww!" We don't blame you.

Lidless toilets are common in public restrooms in airports, movie theaters, malls and office buildings.

And those commodes can be flushed dozens of times per day.

Health study results found that bacteria from human waste becomes "aerosolized" when a lidless toilet flushes.

That means it shoots up into the air like a vapor. Where does all that nasty airborne bacteria land? Researchers of one study discovered it settles in and on wall-mounted hand dryers where it can be redeposited on hands. Like we said, ewwwwww!

For this health study, a research team examined 36 restrooms at the University of Connecticut's School of Medicine. They exposed plates to 30 seconds of a blasting hand dryer compared to plates sitting in a restroom where a dryer wasn't running.

The health study findings: The hand dryer-exposed plates carried an average of 18-60 colonies of bacteria. Plates left sitting for two minutes in plain restroom air collected only one colony of bacteria on average. According to the health study results, the Connecticut researchers now believe that hand dryers may act as reservoirs for bacteria and spores. By the way, the restrooms analyzed by those scientists now provide paper towels for hand drying.

### Health Study No. 3: Night Owls vs. Morning People— Who's Healthier?

Night owls will tell you there's nothing more grating than listening to a wide-awake, chipper morning person before 8 a.m. The propensity for rising early or late seems to have an impact on more than just morning wakefulness—it can also impact overall health. That's the finding of a recent study that followed 430,000 adults who described themselves as morning or evening people.

Participants were between the ages 38 to 73, and the health study lasted more than six years. Researchers took into account a number of factors that might affect the results, such as age, gender, smoking and obesity.

The health study findings: Here's a sobering result: Night owls were 10% more likely to die during the test years compared to morning people. The researchers also discovered that diabetes, psychological, neurological and stomach disorders were more common among night owls. Stress, diet, isolation and drug and alcohol use among participants may be responsible for the different medical outcomes, the health study says.

Researchers think the association between sleeping late and poor health could be related to a misalignment of the internal "body clock" to activities such as working and eating. A previous health study linked body-clock disruption to diabetes, hypertension and even depression.

It is thought that chronotype, the scientific term used to describe a preference for morning or evening, is 20-50% determined by genetics. Scientists are investigating whether bright light therapy in the

morning, or the use of melatonin in the evening might shift the chronotype, possibly improving health.

#### More resources:

- Read about the exercise health study [here](#).
- Read about the American Heart Association's exercise recommendations [here](#).
- Read about the hand dryer health study [here](#).
- Read about the night owl vs. morning people health study [here](#).
- Read about the body's internal clock and its impact on health [here](#).

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