

hiking is healthy



Hiking is beneficial for body and soul, our grandparents already told us so decades ago. Today, scientists have proved that a certain kind of hiking can benefit your health even after just a short while. Already on short distances, hiking combined with coordination and relaxation exercises can verifiably make you healthier. For example, your body weight is reduced, your BMI improves and blood pressure decreases.

Researchers of the Halle-Wittenberg University were able to scientifically prove this, as quoted by Christine Merkel, member of the German Hiking Association in Kassel. The Hiking Association has developed this concept of so called Health Hiking together with physiotherapists of the technical college Osnabrück; they have also initiated the current survey. To make this happen, 18 employees met twice a week for seven weeks to hike in accordance with the certified concept. 16 not active employees of the same age group were taken as a comparison group.

Merkel explains that “the hikes were set up for one and a half hours.” Depending on the terrain, the participants covered 3.7 to 5.6 kilometers during each hike. Every time, the averagely 53.6 year old hikers that did not take part in any other kind of sport activity spent one hour in motion. During each hike, they stopped twice to complete physiotherapeutic exercises. (...)

(...)The health status of hikers and comparison group was checked by the researchers, once before the hikes and then again seven weeks later. No changes were seen in the comparison group. The active group’s weight had been reduced by 1.3 kilograms on

average. Their blood pressure was better; their heart rate had gone from 131 to 122 under the same hiking conditions. And also their stamina, determined through lactate values and the oxygen level in their blood, had increased, as Merkel explained. Furthermore, their coordination skills had also improved.

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