

Bringing Research to LIFE

Upcoming Events

Critical Conversations: The Idea of a Human Rights Museum presents

Thinking about an Exhibit on
Agricultural Migrant Workers

Monday, Feb. 13, 2012
2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Room 206, Robson Hall
Faculty of Law
University of Manitoba

For more information, contact
Jennifer Chlopecki at:
(204) 480-1452 or
jennifer_chlopecki@
umanitoba.ca

Health Leisure & Human Performance Research Institute

Research Seminar Series

The physiology of resistance
training, presented
by guest speaker:

William Kraemer,
University of Connecticut

Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2012
at 9:30 a.m.

224 Education Building

For more information, contact
Nicole Dunn at: (204) 474-7451
or nicole_dunn@umanitoba.ca

Research Orientation Series

Week 12: Technology
Commercialization

Thursday, Feb. 16, 2012
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
ORS Boardroom
540 Machray Hall

Friday, Feb. 17, 2012
12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
405 Brodie Centre

Research shows: You may not be exercising as hard as you think (Sitting all day isn't helping either)

BY MELNI GHATTORA
For The Bulletin

The Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology recommends that adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity every week. Complying with this gold standard guideline for physical activity puts you in the clear, right?

According to Danielle Bouchard, assistant professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, there could be some ambiguity. As a result, an individual might have trouble correctly identifying moderate and vigorous activity.

"Right now there's a big gap between what people are achieving and what they think they're achieving," she explains.

According to Bouchard, 60 per cent of Canadians report reaching the recommended amount of physical activity a week, but the reality is that only 15 per cent were actually achieving this.

If you work out five days a week for a minimum of 60 minutes each time, you would be considered physically active — assuming you reach the right intensity, which is hard to measure for most of us.

Part of Bouchard's research program focuses on how to correctly identify physical activity intensity. She's looking for a way that allows people to understand what moderate or vigorous intensity is and how to easily identify it so people can consciously reach the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines when exercising.

Her goal is to change how information is communicated to make it clearer. "It's like the food guidelines, it used to say five to 10 servings and it was confusing for people. So which is it; is it five or is it 10?"

There is another big hurdle to overcome, however: A sedentary routine.

"The problem we are seeing is that while people focus on getting 30 to 60 minutes of daily physical activity, they are not taking into account the 23 hours spent being mostly sedentary," notes Bouchard. "It's those other unaccounted-for hours that are harmful."

Whether it is at your workstation, behind the wheel while long distance driving, or on your living-room couch — if you are sitting for too much of the day, you are at an increased risk of diabetes, heart disease, obesity, various cancers and an early death, research shows.

Chris Silivestru, an implementation specialist in the office of research



Photo by Melni Ghattora

If passing by her office, Danielle Bouchard asks that you "knock hard!" She's probably walking and won't hear over the sound of her treadmill.

services, is taking a stand on the problem of a sedentary work style, literally. Since August 2011, he's been standing at his work station for a minimum of four of his seven-hour work day.

Although Silivestru does lead an active lifestyle, he didn't adopt this work style as a means to stay fit. "I believe the human body is not designed to sit for extended periods of time and it's always been in the back of my mind," he explains.

"I find that when you do things outside of the norm, there is usually resistance. This was a personal choice and I didn't request any special equipment so I did it and my supervisor and colleagues have been really supportive."

Bouchard can certainly relate. "Whenever we have faculty meetings, at some point I am going to stand and it's kind of weird for some people. It's not socially considered as normal behaviour."

One can imagine the reactions to

her office space. When Bouchard joined the U of M in July 2011, she didn't opt for a regular desk; instead she requested a treadmill workstation.

"I use the treadmill anywhere from four to five hours a day and can burn about 600 kilocalories, going at a speed of one mile per hour, but it's not really walking, I would call it moving. I probably burn more kilocalories than I would at a one-hour step class, and some might think 'sounds good, sign me up!'" she laughs.

However, she says, at this low intensity, the heart is not increasing sufficiently to get all of the outcomes and benefits associated with regular physical activity.

Therefore, it is imperative to understand that reducing sedentary time will never replace an exercise session at moderate or vigorous intensity.

The reality is we need both. As Bouchard puts it, "We need to think as much about sedentary behaviour as we have about physical activity."