

## Exercise Speeds Up Wound Healing

The body's ability to heal wounds on the skin normally slows down as we age. However a new study has found that regular exercise may speed up the wound healing process in older people.

A team of researchers followed the progress of 28 healthy people, aged 55 to 77. None of the participants had exercised regularly for at least six months prior to the study.

As part of the research, 13 of them exercised three times a week for three months, while the remaining 15 made no changes to their physical activity habits during the same period.

Each participant received a small puncture wound to the back of the upper arm. The exercise group started exercising about a month before the wound procedure.

The wound was around one-eighth of an inch across and deep. Each wound was photographed three times per week, until it was no longer visible (about six to seven weeks later).

The study found that the skin wounds healed, on average, 10 days faster in those who exercised. In fact, their wounds healed in 29 days compared to 39 days in the non-exercise group.

According to the researchers at Ohio State University, the results are significant because the quicker a wound heals, the less chance there is that it will become infected.

"This is the first time we've been able to document this kind of enhancement associated with exercise. The findings indicate an enhanced rate of wound healing in these older adults", said Professor Charles Emery, one of the main researchers.

Details of this study are published in the Journal of Gerontology.