

Golf's unique combination of outdoor exercise and social interaction can help you live a longer, healthier life. Playing golf can help you live longer – and make those extra years healthier. Indeed, playing the sport can increase your life expectancy by up to five years, according to a study from the Karolinska Institute, in Sweden. Regular walking, such as the four hours it typically takes to play a round of golf, can also help ward off dementia.

A team of scientists looked at the health and longevity of 300,000 golfers and found the death rate for golfers is an incredible 40 per cent lower than for other people of the same sex, age and socioeconomic status who don't play.

Golf provides a healthy dose of fresh air and nature combined with exercise and friendship – a powerful combination for living longer.

Professor Anders Ahlbom, who led the Karolinska study, said: 'A round of golf means being outside for four or five hours, walking at a fast pace for six or seven kilometres, something which is known to be good for the health.' 'People play golf into old age and there are also positive social and psychological aspects to the game that can be of help,' he added.

Indeed, golf can help you make new friends and keep in contact with those you already have. It is an exceptional combination of socialising and sport that can bring a wellbeing boost to your physical and mental health.

Regular walking, such as the four hours it typically takes to play a round of golf, can help ward off dementia. There is no certain way to prevent the disease, but regular exercise can help. A study published in the journal *Neurology*, found that people who regularly walk and get other forms of moderate exercise appear to

significantly lower their risk of developing a form of the disease called vascular dementia. This is the second most common form of dementia after Alzheimer's disease.

Professor Clive Ballard, director of research at the Alzheimer's Society told the Daily Mail:

'Whether it is going for a jog or walking the golf course, keeping physically active is a great way to keep your heart and your brain healthy.

'By keeping active you make sure your brain has a good, strong blood supply, which is essential to help it function better now and in future.

'Exercise is beneficial at every stage of your life so there is no excuse!

Walking five miles a week – which you can cover in a round of golf - is the best medicine to slow progression of Alzheimer's and reduce your risk of developing it, according to research from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

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