

Cyclists test healthier, physically younger than average

A study of fit amateur cyclists aged 55 to 79 found that many were physically and biologically much younger than most people of the same age.

The 81 male and 41 female participants underwent extensive tests of their heart, lung, neuromuscular, metabolic, and hormonal functions.

Their reflexes, muscle and bone strength, and oxygen uptake were also measured, as well as mental ability and general health and well-being.

The results showed that among the cyclists the effects of ageing were far from obvious, with younger and older members of the group having similar levels of muscle strength, lung power and exercise capacity.

In one basic test of falling risk in older people the time taken to stand from a chair, walk three metres, turn, walk back and sit down was recorded.

Taking more than 15 seconds to complete the task generally indicates a high risk of falling. But even the oldest cyclists – those in their seventies – had times that fell well within the norm for healthy young adults.

Professor Norman Lazarus, one of the researchers from King's College London and himself a cyclist, said: "Inevitably, our bodies will experience some decline with age, but staying physically active can buy you extra years of function compared to sedentary people."

Read full, original article: [On your bike: scientists prove that serious cycling can keep you young](#)