

## Chess grandmasters live longer—just like elite athletes

It's well established that elite athletes have a longer life expectancy than the general public. A recent [review](#) of over 50 studies comprising half a million people estimated the athletic advantage to be between 4 and 8 years, on average.

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One can easily imagine how the same genetic endowment and training necessary to develop physical prowess in sport might also manifest in physical health. Now for the first time, a study [published in PLOS One](#) (open access) shows that athletes of the mind – chess grandmasters – show the same longevity advantage as athletes of the body.

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[B]oth groups showed a sizeable life expectancy advantage compared to the general population. For instance, in 2010, the average life expectancy of a chess grandmaster aged 25 was 6.3 years longer than the average for a 25-year-old member of the public. For a 55-year-old chess grandmaster, life expectancy was 4.5 years longer.

The study can't tell us anything about why chess grandmasters live longer than the public. It's possible some of the causes are indirect, such as the grandmasters possibly having higher average IQ (which is itself associated with longevity); elite chess players are also known to take more care of their physical fitness than the general population; and the social and economic benefits of becoming a grandmaster, especially notable in Eastern Europe, may have health benefits.

**Read full, original post:** [Chess grandmasters show the same longevity advantage as elite athletes](#)