Industrialization, urbanization and mechanized transport have reduced physical activity, even in developing countries, so that currently more than 60% of the global population are not sufficiently active.

Physical exercise is linked to longevity, independently of genetic factors. Physical activity, even at an older age, can significantly reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity, help reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and improve lipid profile. It also reduces the risks of colon cancer, breast cancer and ischemic stroke.

Doing more than 150 minutes of moderate physical activity or 60 minutes of vigorous physical activity a week—whether at work, in the home, or elsewhere—can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease by approximately 30%.

Despite documented evidence of the benefit of physical activity in preventing and treating cardiovascular and other chronic diseases, more than a quarter of a million individuals die each year in the United States because of a “lack of regular physical exercise.”

Only 8% of the world’s population currently owns a car. Between 1980 and 1998, the global fleet of cars, trucks and buses grew by 80%, with a third of the increase taking place in developing countries.