In the context of a different study, Suwabe et al. (1) explored the relationship between mild exercise and hippocampal memory function. They concluded that exercise intensity does matter, and given should also be adjusted: People should be asked to do brisk walking rather than slow walking (2, 4). Given the highly practical relevance of the findings, future studies are encouraged to pay attention to the accurate dose–response relationship and distinction between different exercise intensities. The neurobiological effects of acute exercise depend on the duration and intensity of the exercise, and on the training status of the participants (5, 6). From studies with 15- to 16-y-old healthy adolescents we know that a 12-min exercise bout with an intensity of 70–85% maximum heart rate (HR_{max}) is needed to increase steroid hormone levels, in contrast to a group exercising stress-free with 50–65% HR_{max} [meaning no elevation of cortisol, according to Suwabe et al. (1)] but with an increase in memory functions (7). In the limitations, Suwabe et al. (1) admit that the intensity required to optimize the effect of exercise is unknown, mentioning findings in rodents showing that mild exercise training, compared with intense exercise training, enhances neurogenesis (8). However, the rapid form of plasticity observed in this acute study differs from neurogenesis-mediated effects of exercise training, which operate on a much longer timescale (see ref. 9). Taken together, the acute exercise intensities were higher than stated in the article, which from a dose–response point of view makes sense because higher intensities (up to moderate; see ref. 2) should be recommended to promote beneficial effects on neurocognitive functions (6, 7, 10).

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