

The Fitness Benefits of Regular Off-Road Riding

What to expect when you participate: Participation in this study will require your involvement on two separate test days. On the first day, some standard measurements of your physical exertion will be made while you are riding on off-road trails. On the second day you will have a routine assessment of your personal fitness. By relating the level of exertion during your ride to similar levels of exertion in traditional fitness activities (eg jogging), the researchers will be able to estimate the likely fitness benefits of regular off-road riding. By assessing your physical fitness and comparing it to national averages, the researchers can determine whether your past riding involvement has improved your fitness level.

The Riding Day: This will be similar to your average recreational trail ride and you will set your own pace. The only difference between this ride and your normal ride is that along with your regular safety gear you will be provided with additional gear that measures how many calories you use. In addition, at the beginning and end of the ride we will take some basic strength measurements (hand grip, upper body and leg) and ask some questions about your health. This will help the researchers compare the fitness and health of regular off-road riders to that of the general population.

The Lab Day: You will spend approximately two and one half hours with qualified fitness professionals from York University who will assess your fitness and health. Both male and female testers will be present to perform routine tests that you have likely experienced at the doctor's office such as blood pressure, blood lipid analysis and health questionnaires. There will also be an assessment of your physical fitness including strength, flexibility and endurance. All of this information will be kept strictly confidential. You will need running shoes, because part of the fitness test involves running on a treadmill.

Additional information on all aspects of the research is available upon request from jamieb@yorku.ca. Details of the steps involved will be provided to all participants prior to the testing and the researchers happy to answer any questions you might have. Your participation is highly encouraged.