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Educationally Speaking  
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### **Your pancreas might be the size of a kidney bean**

At the beginning of this year I wrote about my involvement with Indiana's INShape program sponsored by Governor Mitch Daniels, designed to help Hoosiers lose weight, quit smoking, get in shape and be healthier. At the same time I joined INshape Indiana I also joined Fishers Gets Moving, a similarly designed program to get Fishers residents outdoors and into the area's parks and trails system.

I set my goals to walk or run 200 miles and spend at least 100 hours in the gym or doing some other rigorous physical activity. To date I have moved over 110 miles and have completed over 50 hours of physical activity.

Then the other day on the radio I was driving into work, chugging down the boulevard like I normally do and a commercial for a central Indiana hospital network came on the radio. The style of the commercial was supposed to be some sort of pseudo-interview where a nice, female narrator interviews the handsome doctor about what sorts of things you should come into the hospital and get checked out. The narrator asked about joint health, particularly in the knees and elbows. The doctor said, "We're seeing a drop in the age of our orthopedics patients. Patients are coming in now as early as their thirties with knee and joint pain. This is likely caused by the increase in physical activity among young adults."

I'm not a doctor, nor should you ever take any medical advice I ever give you but I'm pretty sure he meant, "All that exercise you're doing is grinding your bones together like a bad engine."

We can safely add this to the list of things that can kill me. First it was eggs back in the 90's, and then they were good for me again. First red meat was good for me, and then it was bad for me. First exercise was good for me and now it's bad for me. And the minute I go outside for a 30-minute jog I'll speed up my aging process like I were in a time warp.

The way I figure it, I'm 20 years old and I probably have the body of a 78-year-old man. By all estimates I've only got ten years of mobility left. I'll be in a motorized scooter by the time I'm 40.

Looking back, for the first five years of my life I didn't do much of anything, or at least that I remember. But I have to assume that sitting around on the living room floor and eating pudding wasn't that tough on my bones. So I had a good start. Then, for the next ten years I sat around and played video games – luckily, those video games were there to save me from the sudden death I might have encountered had I been outside playing baseball or something.

Through high school I was active but avoided organized team sports. I imagine team sports are probably the worst thing for your body. I can't imagine that a bunch of people joining together to wear out their bodies in unison can be good for you — and to think that schools struggle to find coaches for these body-busting routines. Suddenly the bench warmer on the football team seems like a healthy position to play.

But for the last three years I've really been active. I used to enjoy playing racquetball at my neighborhood gym and I always put the bike trail near my home to good use, often running as hard as I could only to end up back at the front door. It seems science now says I was just wasting my breath — literally. But not anymore! It's time to quit all of this before my body ages any faster than it has to.

I predict that in the near future scientists will discover that people who watch more TV become more attractive as they age and kids who don't eat their vegetables will have higher IQs as adults than their veggie-snarfing counterparts. For those of you out there drinking your milk for healthy bones and taking your vitamins for an effective immune system, don't kid yourself. Milk is just the devil's poison and vitamins are probably turning your pancreas into a kidney bean. And before you ask, your kidney is likely turning into an apricot or a toaster. Come on, Indiana — let's get back out of shape again before it's too late.