Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (NHPI) older adults often experience social disadvantages and poor health outcomes. Physical activity has been associated with better health in other racial groups, but limited studies have examined these associations in NHPI older adults.

We analyzed data from the 2014 NHPI National Health Interview Survey, which included 1,045 older adults from across the U.S. Based on self-reports, elders were classified as inactive (no activity), insufficiently active (<150 minutes/week), and sufficiently active (150+ minutes/week).

**Detailed Findings**

- Only half the sample reported sufficient physical activity.
- Thirty percent reported no physical activity.
- Seventy-eight percent were overweight or obese based on self-reported height and weight.
- Twenty-nine percent had diabetes.
- Those with higher levels of physical activity were less likely to have memory problems, serious psychological distress, and poor/fair self-rated health.

Dancing hula allows Aunty Nelanette U'ilani Lee to keep her heart healthy while practicing her Hawaiian culture in the Ola Hou i ka Hula program. Photo by Deborah Manog Dimaya.

**Implications**

- More programs are needed that can promote physical activity among NHPI.
- Culturally based programs should be considered, including programs that engage older NHPI adults in hula, paddling, and mālama ʻāina.
- Qualitative research should identify other types of physical activity that may be attractive to specific NHPI groups.
- Health providers in all disciplines should prescribe physical activity to promote cognitive, mental, and physical health.

The goal of Hā Kūpuna: The National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders is to assure the transmission of hā (breath of life; wisdom) from older to younger generations by enhancing knowledge to improve health and well-being. Hā Kūpuna is supported by grant #90010006/01 from the Administration on Aging, US Department of Health and Human Services.