

What?

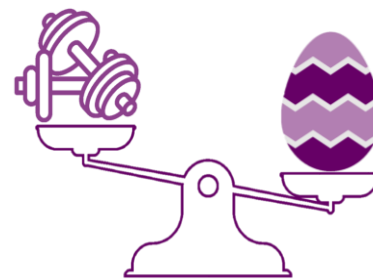
The **substantial positive effects of exercise** are well-known and widely acknowledged. However, maintaining a long-term commitment to going to the gym can be challenging. Periods of disruption (such as the winter break) often interrupt routines, making it harder to stay consistent, especially for new starters.

Why?

When the routine of going to the gym is disrupted, overall exercise levels often decline, since **habit formation** is central to maintaining consistency. A cross-sectional study in Denmark aimed to assess whether a **short-term disruption, such as Easter break**, can significantly affect gym dropout rates.

Factors associated with decline in gym attendance

- **After the end of the holiday** (only when the week prior to Easter was excluded) compared to before
- **Non-retired** gym members
- **Regular (≥ 2 times a week) attendees**, individuals who attended twice a week for 9 weeks prior to Easter or 3 times a week in 6 weeks prior to Easter



Factors associated with no decline in gym attendance

- **Retired** gym members
- **Less regular** (<2 times a week) attendees
- **Weather** and **influenza** season did not have an impact on gym attendance

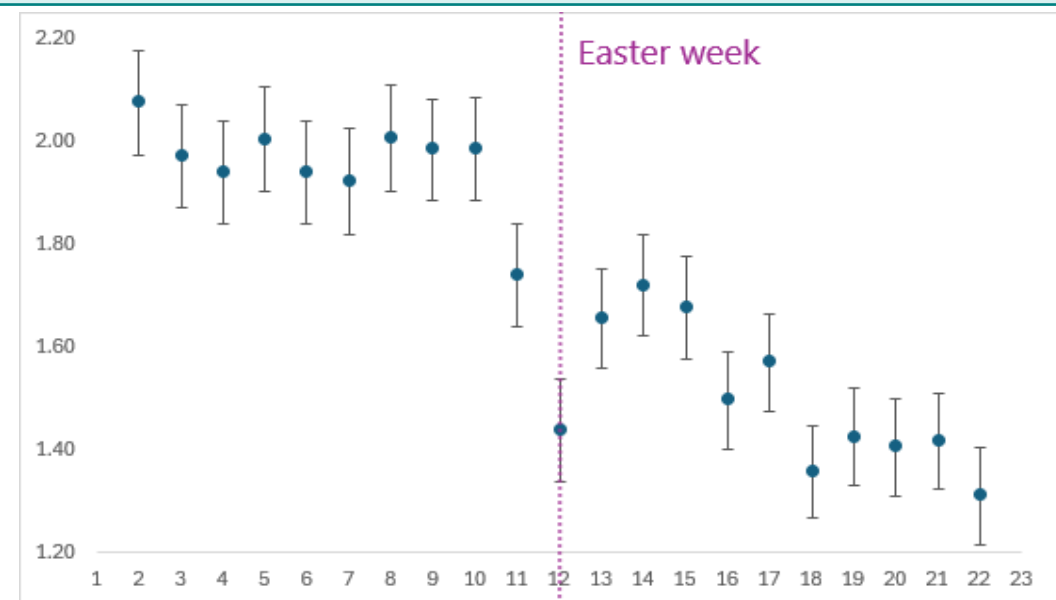
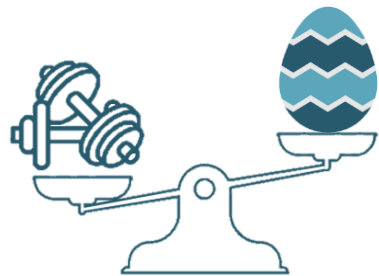


Figure: Development of gym attendance frequency 10 weeks before and after the Easter holidays ¹

Who?

Participants were 1,210 gym subscribers in Denmark, who responded to the questionnaire. Gym attendance was evaluated for **10 weeks before and 10 weeks after Easter**.

Author Comments

- There was a significant **drop in gym attendance** following Easter break for the overall population, indicating a need for providing incentives for re-establishing the routine of going to the gym.
- With no significance placed specifically on Easter break, a question is raised of whether **similar behaviour** is observed **during other holidays** of short-term duration e.g. May bank holiday.
- Several post-hoc analyses showed statistically significant results only for participants who attended the gym, twice a week for 9 weeks, or three times a week for 6 weeks. However, these specific subgroup criteria were **not outlined in the study's original methods**.
- Another limitation is the **exclusion of the week prior to Easter**, due to expected anticipation effect. It is interesting to note that the results of the analysis were only significant after exclusion of week 11 from the analysis.

Reference

Fredslund EK, Leppin A. Can the Easter break induce a long-term break of exercise routines? An analysis of Danish gym data using a regression discontinuity design. BMJ Open 2019;9:e024043. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2018-024043