



COLORADO MATTERS

# How Living At Altitude Can Help -- Or Hurt -- Your Life Span



BY RACHEL ESTABROOK  
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LISTEN Audio: Ryan Warner Speaks With Dr Benjamin Honigman

Colorado has one of the fastest growing populations of aging baby boomers, and many of them are staying fit into old age. Case in point: John Gillingham, an-87-year-old fitness instructor who yesterday **told Colorado Matters host Ryan Warner** that he did 100 lunges and squats the night before their interview. Stories like his made us wonder if living at high altitude contributes to Coloradans' longevity.



Photo: Alex Berger via [Flickr](#). Brightened from original image.

Dr. Benjamin Honigman is associate dean at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and developed its Altitude Research Center. He and his colleagues have found that people living at higher altitude in mountain states like Colorado experience no net increase or decrease in life expectancy, though living at altitude may decrease a person's chances of getting heart disease. Warner spoke with him as part of Colorado Matters' series on aging in Colorado.

*Audio for this story will be available after noon.*

- **Dr. Benjamin Honigman**, Associate Dean, Clinical Outreach, University of Colorado School of Medicine and Medical Director, Clinical Outreach, University of Colorado Hospital
- CU's **Altitude Research Center**
- Research: **Living at higher altitude appears to have no net effect on life expectancy**

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