

The truth about exercise and calorie burn

September 12 2017, by Julie Davis, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—When you consider that a hot fudge sundae can top 500 calories, 30 minutes of walking at a slow pace will barely make a dent in undoing the damage.

But exercise does make a difference where it counts—for both [weight loss](#) and [weight-loss](#) maintenance as well as for overall health.

The math is simple: Burn more [calories](#) than you take in and you'll lose weight. So, if you exercise daily for 30 minutes with an activity that burns 225 calories, you'll lose a half-pound a week, on top of any weight lost from cutting calories in your diet.

For people at a healthy weight, exercise helps avoid [weight gain](#). One study found that an hour of moderate activity every day as a lifestyle habit helped women keep weight off as they got older. Other research found that this was true for men as well.

Most important for successful dieters, sustained exercise can help avoid regaining those unwanted pounds after a loss. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, maintaining a weight loss might take 60 to 90 minutes of daily activity, but this can be broken up into numerous 10-, 20- or 30-minute bouts over the course of each day or evening.

Exercise can sometimes be a double-edged sword, though—it may make some people hungrier. However, low-intensity walking and simply standing instead of sitting may burn calories without triggering that hunger reaction and also counteract the risks to heart health from working for long hours at a desk. So, it might be time to investigate a standing desk.

A particularly beneficial [exercise](#) is strength training to develop your various muscle groups. That's because the body burns extra calories to maintain muscle, even at rest, plus [muscle](#) gives you sleek definition.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has [diet and exercise tips](#) that help with the battle to keep lost

weight from returning.

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Citation: The truth about exercise and calorie burn (2017, September 12) retrieved 3 February 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-09-truth-calorie.html>

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