

# Video Games Help Fight Obesity?

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Video games are often the source of hours of fun - not just for little kids but for big 'kids' as well. The big problem is the strong correlation of sitting for long periods and the development of obesity. But now there is a way to play and fight the flab at the same time. Dr. Mom tells you how.

Childhood obesity has increased over the past decade. Over 1/3 of all school children are overweight or obese while 60% of adults are overweight or obese. Has too much computer time and video game time contributed to this epidemic?

Traditionally, playing video games makes children less active. Thus, contributing to the obesity epidemic among children. Children now average 8 hours of screen time, which includes television, computer, and video games.

Activity-oriented games such as Nintendo's Wii features bowling, tennis, boxing, golfing, and baseball involves. Konami's Dance Dance Revolution game can provide a greater workout and is more likely to help improve one's fitness level. These games involve movement and help burn calories.

A recent study at the Mayo Clinic measured the energy spent playing video games. The study included children with normal weight for their height and children who were mildly obese. Both groups were tested while sitting and watching television, playing a traditional video game, playing two types of activity-required video games, and watching television while walking on a treadmill.

The results showed that sitting while watching television and playing traditional video games expended the same amount of energy. When participants played with the first activity-oriented video game, three times the amount of energy was expended. The result was the same for the lean group and mildly obese children. Walking on a treadmill while watching TV tripled expended energy, but showed a fivefold increase for the mildly obese group. While using a dance video game, both groups burned the most calories, but it was considerably more for the obese group - over six times more than sitting still.

Even though these new games consoles provide another means of activity, parents should encourage other physical activities and outdoor pursuits in order for children to lead well-balanced lives.

More information:

- [Wii Sports Experiment, Results!](#)
- [Exercise + Entertainment = Wii is good for your health](#)