

# Do Pokémon Go and augmented reality games offer real health benefits?

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Credit: Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., publishers

The combination of augmented reality technology, geocaching, and other novel techniques to create innovative active video games (AVGs) has potential personal and public health implications, as discussed in the Editorial "Pokémon Go, Go, Go, Gone?" published in *Games for Health*.

In the Editorial, Editor-in-Chief Tom Baranowski, PhD, Professor of Pediatrics, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX, identifies many lessons that can be learned from the success of the popular AVG Pokémon Go, in which players can log hours of walking as they physically chase the animated Pokémon creatures based on video images displayed on their smart phones. Dr. Baranowski encourages researchers to conduct well-designed studies to assess the [health](#) effects of AVGs. Game developers could then use this information to create new games

that would be both fun to play and promote beneficial physical activity.

"Pokémon Go stimulated substantial amounts of physical activity in many likely-otherwise sedentary [game](#) players without intending to! We might call this stealth exergame programming, and we have a lot to learn about how to achieve this!" says Dr. Baranowski.

**More information:** Tom Baranowski, Pokémon Go, go, go, gone?, *Games for Health Journal* (2016). [DOI: 10.1089/g4h.2016.01055.tbp](https://doi.org/10.1089/g4h.2016.01055.tbp)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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