

Golfing and gardening your way to fitness

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(HealthDay)—Leisure-time activities like golf and gardening can become efficient calorie-burning exercises—if you tweak your routine just a bit.

Here's how to turn these popular pursuits into muscle-building workouts.

On the links, skip the [golf cart](#), suggest experts at the Harvard School of Public Health. You can log up to four miles by walking the average course for your round of [golf](#). Play at off-peak times so you're walking more consistently and not waiting around.

If you carry your clubs or pull them yourself, you'll benefit even more.

And don't ruin your workout by sitting down to a [heavy meal](#) at the clubhouse afterward. Keep it light with a salad or healthy sandwich wrap.

To get in your best shape to play and avoid injury, golfers should stretch at least 3 times a week. Pay special attention to your back, shoulders and arms.

At home, play in the dirt. An hour of active gardening can burn as many as 300 calories, according to the American Council on Exercise.

Get in some heart-healthy cardio by using a push mower rather than firing up the power mower. Raking and hoeing help tone your arms, shoulders, chest and back.

Digging targets your glutes and thighs. Planting an herb or vegetable garden will get you outside with more regularity to tend to your crops. And, of course, you'll be able to eat what you sow. Nothing tastes better than your own vine-ripened tomatoes, zucchini and cucumbers.

To avoid injury when [gardening](#), remember to use good posture and keep all your motions steady and smooth.

More information: The National Gardening Association has advice

for starting a [vegetable garden](#) to improve your diet and your health.

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