

Exergaming: workouts that work for all ages

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(HealthDay)—"Exergaming"—playing video games that get you off the sofa and into the action—has positive fitness benefits that span the generations.

It can be a way to introduce sedentary kids to [exercise](#) and even keep seniors fit. Because it engages the mind, it also may lead to better cognitive function in your later years as well.

Whether simulating tennis, golf or dance, which is particularly effective at [burning calories](#), these games engage your entire body in interactive [physical activity](#).

Exergaming has many things going for it. First of all, it's fun, and that's important if you think of exercise as a chore. Many people don't even feel like they're exercising as they play.

If you choose a [game](#) for two or more, you get the benefits of having an exercise buddy or group to help encourage you. Many games allow you to start at a beginner level and increase the difficulty as you advance, providing built-in motivation.

Playing with your kids helps instill in them a love of exercise from an early age, and these games can go with them into adulthood. Research shows that exergaming can help kids fighting obesity, especially girls aged 12 to 15, a group that gets the least amount of physical activity, according to a study in the *Journal of Sport and Health Science*.

The mind-body advantages of exergaming may also extend to children with autism.

With new games being introduced all the time, the hardest decision you're likely to face is which brand of console to buy. Compare the options, and then let the fun begin.

More information: To learn more about exergaming for yourself or your kids, the American College of Sports Medicine has a [factsheet](#) with all the essentials.

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