

# An hour of daily exercise seems way out of line

- **May 10th, 2010**
- (0) comments

By Kathy Hedberg



## UP FRONT/COMMENTARY

Every now and then the health and nutrition experts come up with some new idea that makes you realize these guys aren't nearly as boring as most scientists usually are.

Not long ago, the experts told us that the amount of exercise needed for middle-aged women who wish to maintain their weight has been adjusted from 30 minutes three times a week to 60 minutes daily.

Don't bother getting out your calculators - that's an hour of exercise every day. And it's not geared to lose weight, but just to maintain what you already carry.

These guys are regular comedians.

It's not like we don't have anything else in our lives. Middle-aged women still have families to care for, jobs to do, parents, relatives and friends to check on, pets to feed, meetings to attend. We're already up at 4 a.m. and in bed by 11 p.m., and then, what with the hot flashes and all, we sleep only two or three hours a night, but, hey, if you can't function on that you're a total weenie.

With that kind of schedule it's a challenge to figure out how to exercise even three times a week for a half-hour. So just how do these adorable health and fitness experts expect us to squeeze another full hour out of every day to run to the gym or take a walk?

Years ago a friend of mine who struggled with her weight said the only reason she exercised was to support her habit - of eating. That's probably the way a lot of us get into exercise. It's not the sweat, the sore muscles or the burning sensation in your lungs of overexertion that attracts us. It's simply that if we exercise we can have lunch.

The trick is to burn more calories than you eat, and the thing to remember is that everything you do burns calories. Just sitting at my computer writing this column, for instance, is burning about 100 calories an hour, which means I could have a glass of wine when I get finished, which is a darned good idea.

If I chose, instead, to have an ice cream sandwich I would have to do more exercise to burn it off, such as butchering an animal, trimming my trees with a chain saw, or ballroom dancing for an hour.

Seems like a lot of work to do for a snack.

It's good to be conscious of the need to be healthy and remind people that we all need to get up and move our bodies every day to stay in shape.

But 60 minutes a day? Doesn't seem reasonable. I wonder how many calories it took those experts to come up with that formula?

---

*Hedberg may be contacted at  
khedberg@camasnet.com or (208) 983-2326.*