

healthy you **FITNESS**

Pump Up Holiday Chores

Try these tweaks to sneak in some extra yuletide exercise.

BY DOUG DONALDSON

as you've discovered, holidays leave little time for regular exercise. "From Thanksgiving through New Year's, you need to plan for the holiday schedule madness," says Fabio Comana, a spokesperson for the American Council on Exercise and a certified personal trainer. Here's a little holiday cheer for you: Those same chores and errands that have you swamped can help make up for the loss of regular workout time.

HOUSE CLEANING

When you stretch under the couch to zap a few dust bunnies or reach to pick up magazines, those multi-directional lunges are good exercise.

Yuletide tweak While cleaning, short bursts of higher intensity effort can benefit your cardiovascular system. After going upstairs to put away clothes, walk back down for a couple fast-paced trips back up the steps. Walk slowly on the way down each time to recover. How do you know if you exercised enough? Your house is clean.

Happy returns Vacuuming alone can burn 238 calories per hour. The potential weight loss and toning benefit of an hour of intensive, nonstop cleaning is roughly the same as taking a good hike, says Robert Reames, a personal trainer and author of *Make Over Your Metabolism*.



SHOPPING

When you brave the mall this year, don't fret over the lack of parking—embrace it. Park far away from the store so you have a decent walk, says Mark Campana, owner of M. Campana Fitness in Akron, Ohio.

Yuletide tweak Have a plan, know which stores you need to visit, and keep moving between stores. The more constant the movement, the more you'll keep your heart rate elevated.

Happy returns Instead of carrying a load of bags, make frequent trips to your car and back. You could easily walk a couple miles in a day of shopping.

COOKING

Grab your whisks and stir ingredients instead of using a blender.

Yuletide tweak The motion from stirring will give you some exercise. Also, have a couple full 20-ounce water bottles handy; while monitoring pots hold the bottles like dumbbells and do a few repetitions of bicep curls, recommends Reames. **Happy returns** Blending by hand burns 136 calories per hour, and a couple dozen repetitions with the water bottles helps tone your arms.

Party your way to fitness

Host more active gatherings this year instead of the usual sedentary cocktail party. For example, try:

MEETING AT THE RINK You can still bring items for a holiday spread, but set them aside and only dig in after everyone

has a chance to strap on blades and explore their inner figure skater.

RE-CREATING FROSTY Host a snowman-making party. Each person whips up a sculpture that resembles himself or herself (if abstractly).

OUTRUNNING THE WEATHER Ask the gang to sign up to participate in a winter event, such as a 5k jog or a chilly charity walk. You'd be surprised at how many events still go on through the colder months. Check out the race planner at runnersworld.com for ideas.

ILLUSTRATION: VEEB