The Yard Workout

By Michele Guerra, Director – Campus Wellbeing Services
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Here's a quick quiz: Which burns more calories: walking at a 20-minute mile pace or mowing the lawn?

You might be surprised to learn that mowing the lawn with a push mower burns more calories per minute than walking at a 20 minute mile pace. People don't think of gardening and yard work as physical activity but it is. Remember, when it comes to being active everything "counts".

Getting out and working in the yard can be a great way to get increase physical activity for number of reasons:

- You can do it as a family.
- You get fresh air.
- You may have the opportunity to see your neighbors.
- You save time because you accomplish a task that needs to be done and get your activity in at the same time.
- You can save money if you currently pay someone to do your yard work for you.

So how many calories can you actually burn digging in the dirt? The following table shows the calorie burn for several common yard and garden activities:

Activity	Intensity level of activity	Calories burned per minute*	Calories burned in 30 minutes*
Laying sod	moderate	4.5	135
Raking lawn	moderate	4.5	135
Mowing lawn – power push mower	moderate	5.0	150
Weeding, digging in garden	moderate	5.0	150

Mowing lawn – hand mower	hard	6.7	201
Shoveling – light to moderate	hard	7.3	219
Digging ditches	very hard	9.5	285

* Calories burned are calculated for a person weighing 140 pounds. If you weigh less, you'll still burn plenty of calories – just a little less. And if you weigh more you'll burn a few more calories.

So, quit paying the kid down the street to mow your lawn and rake your leaves. Save some money and gain some important physical activity by doing it yourself. You'll enjoy the outdoors and burn calories at the same time.