

## **Are Video Games That Stimulate Playing Sports Effective At Expending Calories?**

Statistics show that the average youth spends several hours each day watching television, using a computer and/or playing video games. Statistics also show that most youths fail to attain the recommended amount of daily physical activity. The new generation of video games that stimulate playing sports or performing activities allows kids to get “screen time,” yet be active. But how much does this “active gaming,” or exergaming, really increase caloric expenditure?

In one study, 11 adolescents (average age 14.6) played four video games for 15 minutes each. The researchers found that active gaming (bowling, boxing and tennis) used 52 to 61 percent more calories than sedentary gaming (a racing game). The results were even better in a study of 25 children (average age 9.7) who played three video games for 15 minutes each. This study showed that active gaming (general movement and dancing) used 73 to 120 percent more calories than sedentary gaming (a skating game).

But let's not kid ourselves. Although active gaming uses more calories than sedentary gaming, nothing can take the place of actually participating in a real sport or activity.