

# No Fooling - It's Time To Burn Some Calories

Summer is heading our way and I want the bowling community to look and feel just as good outside the bowling center as we do inside the bowling establishment. For decades, society has maintained a preconceived notion that bowlers are beer drinking, cigar smoking, overweight people who enjoy the sport. There may be a small segment of our population that fits that description, but only a small segment. **On the other hand, there are those of us who share an extreme concern about health and wellness, willing to employ the means by which to improve our physical fitness, positively curbing bowling performance.** We consider ourselves as athletes, whether competitive or not, athletes we are. So, let us explore a not so strenuous but fruitful look into expending athletic energy and burning some calories. Not just any calories mind you but fat calories. It is time to get active, invigorate us, and improve performance, appearance, and health.

## Fitness Education

Understanding fitness will better enable us to achieve our ultimate goal of improved sport performance. According to the **American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)**, fitness is significant throughout life to develop and preserve functional capacity satisfying the demands of daily living. Functional capacity is our ability to execute physical functions such as walking, jogging, carrying, reaching, lifting, holding, pushing, stepping, grabbing, twisting, etc. . . . "Fitness" is our body's ability to efficiently deliver and utilize oxygen to the working muscles. Let me explain. The heart, lungs, and blood pathways all work together to take oxygen from the lungs, carry it to the muscles, and convert it to energy. **The body uses this energy to power muscles during activity whether it is running, lifting, walking, or bowling.** Consequently, the greater fitness level maintained promotes a more efficient and effective use of oxygen and energy.

Before specifying a precise exercise pattern, let us briefly explore the reasoning behind supplementing our bowling with exercise. There is a purpose behind every action. A driving force motivating impulse. A simplistic reason of why. When referring to exercise, these motivators are often termed **benefits**. I like to classify them as either **direct effects** or **outcomes**. The outcomes of a fitness program are the resultant adaptations or changes in the physiological function, health and appearance of our body. Though other possible motivators exist such as social benefits, self-efficacy, or goal orientations, studies have shown most people exercise for health related reasons. Training the body by using exercise sends specific messages to various organs, hormones, tissues, systems, and brain cells creating numerous adaptations. Therefore, by increasing activity levels (exercise patterns) we express to the body specific preferred changes.

Athletes seeking to improve their sport performance, health and physical appearance should support burning extra fat calories by becoming more aerobically active. **The basic principle is based on the tenant that exercise improves physical fitness while expending body fat as energy.** Research has shown greater amounts of aerobic activity will unequivocally improve our fitness level while burning body fat for energy. That is not to negate the other variables or components that factor such as genetics, dietary habits, stress levels, hydration, rest periods, and physiological state. Nevertheless, let us bolster our fitness level and burn some additional fat calories by increasing aerobic activity.

## Burning Calories

The body balances caloric consumption by the means of energy expenditure (activity). When in balance, body weight remains constant (A). If caloric intake increases and activity does not, the body will retain the excess calories converting most them to fat (B). **If activity increases while caloric ingestion remains stable, we burn excess fat calories reducing stored body fat (C).**

**To burn and rid the body of excess fat calories, increased activity via aerobic exercise will satisfy the need.** Aerobic exercise is endurance in nature requiring continuous movement of large amounts of body mass for extended periods. That is a mouthful. **In other words, getting the body moving continuously for durations of initially 15 minutes up to one hour.** Now, I do not want to start a lengthy discussion on aerobic training because, again, the impetus here is to expend excess calories and not necessarily to train the cardiovascular system. Two not-so- totally different things. We will save that for a later date. First things first. Choose your weapon. The following aerobic exercises provide the means to begin our caloric burning phase.

running jogging biking swimming rowing  
cross country skiing healthridding treadmilling inline skating  
versaclimbing nordic tracking recumbent biking

My favorite is **upright cycling**. I generally ride the stationary upright bike 30-40 minutes, 2-3 times weekly. Several other great options include **aquaerobics, step aerobics, low and high impact aerobics, dance aerobics, slide aerobics, boxing aerobics**, or a new craze, **spinning**.

After choosing a favorite form of exercise, you can now begin burning away the fat. The duration of exercise is a key point with which to spotlight. Duration refers to time involved exercising. **ACSM** recommends doing aerobic exercise twice weekly, a minimum of 20 minutes or more each session. **I concur with ACSM's guidelines encouraging and challenge each of you to meet or even surpass them in a safe and effective manner.** Not focusing on cardiovascular conditioning allows us to greatly vary the intensity level of our extended exercise. Exercise intensity must also be addressed. Intensity refers to effort put forward and the energy expended during the exercise. Maximal forms of effort will result in minimal duration. You will get tired quickly. **Therefore, to burn off those few extra calories, plan to extend the exercise within your duration limits by emitting only an average to above average effort or intensity level.** Again, do not get this confused with cardiovascular training that aims to train the heart and lungs. We are merely burning extra calories.

In light of many individuals' fears to exercise, there are countless training techniques that can produce valuable results. Becoming more aerobically active at sub-maximal intensity levels allows us to burn additional calories without over stressing the cardiovascular system. Enjoy this routine for it is an easy one geared toward those who dislike my grueling workouts but still seek satisfaction of gaining ground becoming physically fit. Remember, exercise is work, but can be fun, enjoyable, and does not always have to be exhaustive.

### **Jeff's Calorie Burning Guidelines**

1. Choose an aerobic exercise within your comfort zone and liking.
2. Determine a suitable duration beyond 20 minutes.
3. Exert suitable effort or intensity to insure completion of a specified time.
4. Drink fluids before, during, and after the aerobic exercise session assuring proper hydration.
5. Plan to do the same or similar exercise twice or more weekly.

Consult your doctor or physician before beginning any exercise program.